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Pathway to God

(A Quarterly Journal of Spiritual Life)

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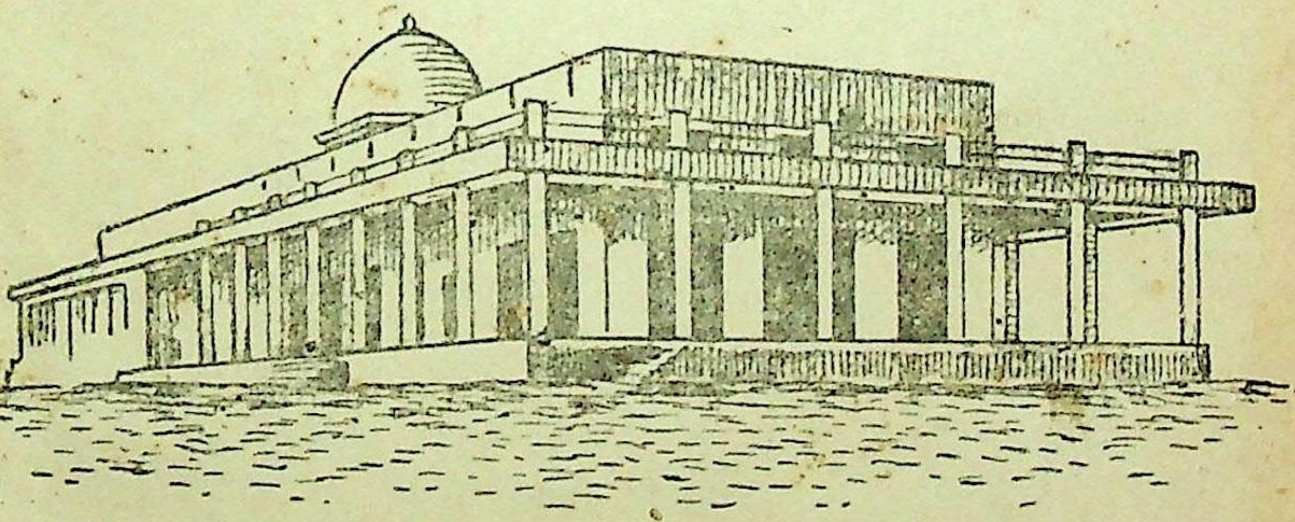
आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः ।



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PATHWAY TO GOD

(A Quarterly Journal of Spiritual Life)

" One God, One World, One Humanity "

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PRAYER

वायुर्यमोऽग्निर्वरुणः शशाङ्कः प्रजापतिस्त्वं प्रपितामहश्च ।
नमो नमस्तेऽस्तु सहस्रकृत्वः पुनश्च भूयो ऽपि नमो नमस्ते ॥३९॥
नमः पुरस्तादथ पृष्ठतस्ते नमोऽस्तु ते सर्वत एव सर्व ।
अनंतवीर्यामितविक्रमस्त्वं सर्वं समाप्नोषि ततो ऽसि सर्वः ॥४०॥

B. Gita: XI.

Thou art Vāyu (Wind God), Yama (God of death), Agni (Fire God), Varuna (Sea-God) and the Hare-marked (Moon God) and Prajāpati (Lord of Creation) as also the Great Grandsire. Obeisance, obeisance unto Thee, a thousand times and yet again and again obeisance to Thee.

Obeisance to Thee in front; obeisance to Thee behind and obeisance to Thee on every side, O All. Thou art of infinite potence and boundless valour. Thou dost penetrate all and therefore Thou art All.

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EDITORIAL.

The Law of Karma And Divine Grace.

Human life is, as Hindus believe, governed by the inexorable Law of Karma which has its universal application in the human world. The law is the counter-part in the mora sphere of the mechanical law of causation. According to this law, there is nothing chaotic or capricious in the moral world. As we sow, so shall we reap. What we are and what circumstances we find ourselves in, are dependent upon what we were and what we did; similarly, what we shall be and how we shall be circumscribed will depend on what we are and what we do at present. 'A man becomes good by good deeds. and bad by bad deeds.'

'Karma' does not bind man entirely. The Law of Karma does not lead to fatalism as is wrongly supposed. Instead, it does allow moral freedom to the individual. So even when the law is determining our life and deeds, we are free to choose our own way and carve our future destiny. This is the greatest hope itcreates in us. Still the limited freedom we, the dependent souls, enjoy is surely granted to us by the merciful God, the only Absolutely Independent Principle.

The Law of Karma suggests that human actions do not perish and are therefore significant. We cannot therefore afford to be negligent in what we choose to do. By our willed deeds we get ourselves entangled in the world and suffer from the miseries of bondage. We are to make conscious efforts to free ourselves completely from the cyele of births and rebirths by trying to wipe out the evil effects of the Karmas which have already started bearing their fruits. In doing so, we are advised to indulge in good deeds which, besides nullifying the bad consequences of past deeds, also assist us in shaping a bright future for ourselves. In the task of preventing future entanglement · we are advised to indulge in deeds without desiring for their reward. This is the Gita injunction of ' Niṣkāma-Karma ' well known to us all. Such-karmas, free from attachment, do not lead to further effects just as fried seeds do not germinate.

The Law of Karma, effective as it is. being a non-intelligant principle has to function under the supervision and guidance of God, the Omniscient and Omnipotent Supreme Being. God as the inner controller controls all our activities as per His plan. He controls the Law of Karma as well· He is the real cause of bondage and release of the *jivas* From this it follows that in our effort to obtain *Mokṣa* by putting an end to the bondage due to Karma (Karmabandhana) it is not enough to work according to the Law of Karma. It becomes incumbent on us to seek the Grace of God who showers the Grace only when He is pleased with the *bhakti* exhibited by us. Our activities have to culminate in unswerving and pure devotion to God which in turn paves the way to the final goal of *Mukti*. The necessary step between *Bhakti* and *Mukti* is Divine Grace. While sanctioning *Mukti*, God, who alone can sanction it to the eligible through His

THE SUFI CONCEPT OF SOUL

Dr. M H. Siddiqui.
M. S. University : Baroda.

Whether in religion or in philosophy, the question regarding the ultimate nature of reality has always bothered men of serious thinking. And since there is a soul or spirit, which comprehends reality, the question ralating to the nature of soul or spirit has always presented an awe. It goes without saying that such thinkers who did give importance to soul, had ruled out extreme materialism.

The Sufi thinkers belonged to the category who had very interesting conventions regarding soul. Some Sufis like Hazrat Nizam ud-din Auliya(1) have allotted it total spirituality(2) So much so that soul has a place, not even in this physical world or even body, but somewhere in celestial kingdom Such a concept of soul, however, is not the first of its kind. There has been a Jaina concept which explains some stage of soul's development by referring it to

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1 Muhammad bin Ahmad Danyal bin Ali Bukhari, well known as Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Auliya, was the most outstanding figure of Medieval Indian Saints. He was born in Badaun on 9th October 1238 AD and died in 1325 AD.

2 Muhammad bin Mubarak Kirmani, Sayyid, Siyar-ul-Auliya, MS (Maulana Azad Library, Aligarh), P.303

a spiritual realm, but, of course, they believed in the degrees of souls, and accordingly, even matter has soul.

However, even Sufis have mentioned such an hierarchy of souls especially when they talk of kinds of souls; the lowest, being the souls of physical world such as earth, mountains, rivers and even hills; the middle one being the souls of the heaven, and the highest ones are those who are God's favourites. Such is their subtlety that the souls of this highest category are invisible, if they descend to the lower stages. However, strangely enough, human soul which forms an Independent category by itself, is subtler still (3) It encourages our imagination to form a concept of the nature of soul, by introducing a criterion of difference. We are aware of the physical world, and hence, truly speaking, aware only of the "Souls of the lower stage." And if the human soul by-passes all these stages of the hierarchy in subtlety, then enough has been suggested regarding the intangibility of human soul. To arrive at such a concept by a metaphoric road such as the Sufis have suggested, is highly appealing aesthetically.

It is not without reason that creativity is hailed compared to intellectual criticism, where the questions demanding depth are raised.

Such a soul is endowed with special powers. It is freely given to mobility of any range. It is totally unaffected by fire or water. It has capacity of descending to the gross body and attaining the subtle one, provided it is qualified for

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3 Muhammad bin Mubarak Kirmani, Sayyid, Siyar-ul-Auliya, MS (Maulana Azad Library, Aligarh). pp. 306-7.

the letter. And this qualification calls in for entire Sufi ethics. The soul has to attain the characters necessary for such a status; they are not bestowed upon it. Thus the inherent nature of soul need not be highly spiritualistic or commendable. The virtues commonly allotted to it are all the result of the aspiration that the gross body having souls may have and may endeavour to have. Thus, perfection is an achievement through mortification and not a "gift from above." It is only this soul then, that may have a will power which dominates the entire physical existence of a person. It acquires such a cosmic identification with the Universe that slight misery in other causes suffering in the body of the perfect soul. There is a reference by Shaikh Abu Sayeed that he himselt felt whipped when he saw any one suffering, such a punishment (4). A very recent example of similar vein is found in the biography of Shree Ram Krishna Paramhans. He too sustained injuries on his back when he saw the bulls being whipped. These examples from two varying cultures are sufficient indicators to show the imminent relation of soul with the reality; call it spirit or matter This intimate relation hence has made the statement, "he who knows himself knows God", (5) a formidable challenge even to those who refuse to entertain the existence of a super-natural being.

Another category of human soul is Nafs (lower soul). This is as interesting fable of how at all this evil spirit came to reside in human body, and thereby showing that evil is an Inseparable part of the human heart. It is impossible to

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4 Amir Hasan Sijzi. Fawaid-ul-Fuad, p.77

5 Muhammad bin Mubarak Kirmani, Sayyid. Siyar-ul-Aulym, MS p. 306.

root it out completely. The fable is in relation to Eve who entertained the evil till it got the better of Adam's wrath, and as a result, was devoured by Adam. Thus, the evil had served its purpose of permanently getting mingled with human constitution. Nevertheless, if this evil spirit which is directly responsible of the spiritual betterment of human being, became evil, being a constant factor, poses a constant challenge, and thus, helps him aspire higher, till evil is totally conquered. And such a possibility is never ruled out in any cult whatsoever.

A natural consequence of such a query is to think of the soul as (i) embedded in body and (ii) soul 'outside' the body. Enough has been said along the first line af thought, in all ethical scriptures. The way of life, either advocated by founders, maseeha, seers of truth, is nothing other than the nature of relationship of the soul, i. e. spirit with the world outside i. e. non-spirit.

The nature of relationship that is more complex and imagination-provoking is one that, that concerns the fate of soul after the body perishes. It is one thing to claim its existence or pervasion while it can be perceived through the movements. growth and change. and quite another to apprehend its state in the absence of any tangible, varifiable clue. Hence there is colour and variety in the proposition concerning life after death; in other words, the condition of " soul in itself ".

With Sufis then, like with many world-known faiths of Christians and Jews, it is the day of judgement that decides the future of " soul without body ". Under no condition will it be embodied once more, and thus the question of re-birth, is totally ruled out.

Even though it has always been accepted that the will of God rules supreme in all matters, a soul is never reborn, unless as a maseeha or a Christ, (the son of God; though it remains to be conjectured whether such messengers of God ever had a previous body).

Normally the day of judgement decides once and for all, the life after death, for the soul; there is, however, strictly speaking the death of the body, never of the soul. Strangely enough, all varied faiths unanimously accept its imperishability.

Sufis too are advocators of the past human ceremonies. They believe that the soul in question is tried by the Lord on the day of judgement, but of course, the relatives may offer gifts to the poor and pray for the relief and happiness of the souls, which have lead questionable lives. Other souls who have been praise-worthy, of course, are rewarded accordingly. However, the aspirations of the man while still alive, have an important role in choosing his own life, after death, provided he has lead his life in accordance with the scriptures; if he desired material well-being he will most likely get it, if he longed and strived for God's vision, that wish will also be fulfilled. On the day of judgement the men will be raised by the criterion of the form and the quality which he possessed while he was alive, and at the time of his death. For example, an excessively lusty man will be called to become a pig, and an excess of anger will make him leopord.(6)

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6 Maulana Hamid Qalandar, Khair-ul-Majalis, p. 157.

Sufi literature is full of subtle suggestions that renunciation is absolutely necessary to attain God. The worldly conflicts create difficulties in the path of attaining such a highly placed God, and hence, this world should be given by entirely. Such a view stands out in wide contrast to the views so popularly advocated, especially in Hinduism, that there is no need to renounce the material world for the sake of the spiritual; for it is only the knowledge of identity of things that will enlighten the person, and not the attitude of differentiating the spiritual from the material. Once the knowledge of "Oneness of spirit" dawns in man's life, he is free from conflict, whatever his disposition.

But it may be agreed that there is perceivably a world which is totally material, and a constant reaction with it, does lead to some conflict; a devotee does find it difficult to cope up with his daily life and a life of spiritual goal. In such a case where a devotee fundamentally makes distinctions, Sufi suggestions are not out of place. And there have been examples even from such a cult who renounced the world and attained spiritual success. Almost all religions will abound in such cases, though of course, the former instances of the spiritually enlighted persons of day-to-day life, are not totally absent, though rare.

It may be hinted that the nature of soul in Sufism is not the same as that nature of the fundamental spirit of the Universe, which may be called God. The Sufis have a philosophy which is basically dualistic, wherein the worshipperis not the very soul which is worshipped. A similar cult of Vallabhacharya still survives inspite of the great non-dualistic advocation of almost all the rest of the Vedantins. Freedom of soul and renunciation have a meaning in Sufism. They are real and not apparent. The nature of soul is such that it is capable of marking out its own spiritual path, and deciding its own future, and if successful, even enjoying it. Sufism guides the devotee along the promise it makes and to attempts to fulfil it. The path of renunciation thus is stressed as compulsory and not just hinted as arbitrary. Even if the Sufis doubt the possibility of knowing the divine misteries, knowledge of God as such is not denied to anyone. There are some Sufi cults who observe total silence regarding the nature of even the human soul, leave alone God. Nevertheless, they grant evil (lower soul) and they even agree with the rest, that devotion is the foundation stone towards the heights of spiritual peak.

Granted that the problem concerning the nature of soul is so intricate that it cannot be sufficiently discussed without touching the other related problems like the Nature of God, renunciation, world and re-birth, Sufism has shown a uniqueness of its kind in granting soul, a status totally its own. It is not the spirit which pervades the entire world, nor a part of the spirit which rules the entire world, not even of the type which other creatures of the world have, but one that is different from them all, a soul, whose only aim can be its own pleasure or happiness. If former, then he has a code of conduct to its aid; if latter, he has to supplement this code of conduct with a burning desire to renounce the world and attain its happiness in being qualified for spiritual bliss.

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'UDDHAREDATMANATMANAM'
(उध्दरेदात्मनात्मानम्)

Geeta-Student.

The Bhagavadgita is a unique work among the scriptures of the world and consists of pithy, epigrammatic statements which imply much more and much deeper than what their literal meaning might convey. Literally considered, these statements appear to be very simple and any one who is a little conversant with them feels that he can very easily comprehend them. However, their far-reaching subtle implications have confounded many a scholar; and it is these implications which have made room for widely variant interpretations of the work.

One of the most confounding statement of this type is the celebrated verse:

उध्दरेदात्मनात्मानम् नात्मानम् अवसादयेत् ।
आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बंधु: आत्मैव रिपुरात्मन: ।।

Superficially, this verse means: " One should uplift oneself by one's own self, one should not dishearten oneself; (because) one is verily one's own friend, and one is one's own enemy, " And this appears to be a gospel of self-effort as against complete surrender to and reliance upon God. I seems to indicate that spiritual realization can be achieved by our effort - say, by the *Aṣṭānga Yoga,* discrimination, meditation or the like. No one can deny that, in a sense, it is a gospel of self-effort. But what is the nature of this self-effort? An attempt to answer this question will bring to our notice the deep and far-reaching implications of this wonderful verse.

The term *ātman* is ambiguous and may mean either the individual, conditioned by *Māyā*, or the essence of every being- i. e., Brahman or God (1). Such ambiguous usage is not a peculiarity with the Sanskrit language alone. In English also the term Self (which might be considered to be almost a synonym for *ātman*) is ambiguous. In such expressions as 'myself,' 'yourself,'' the suffix 'self', implies the individual; but, when we use the expressions my '*Self*', your '*Self*' etc, '*Self* means the essence - the *soul,* the inner divinity of the individual.

Unless we postulate that the term ātman is used in this verse in two somewhat different senses, it is not possible to interpret it sensibly· Literally considered, the statement

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१. आत्मनस्तु कामाय सर्वं प्रियं भवति । (Everything is dear for the sake of the Self). " It is important to remember that this passage is not to be interpreted in the interest of an egoistic theory of morals,as some have done, but only in the interest of the theory of Self-realization. We have not to understand that the wife or the husband or the sons are dear for one's own sake, interpreting the word *Ātman* in an egoistic sense .... We are .... obliged to interpret the word Ātman throughout the passage in the sense of the Self proper, the Ultimate Reality ...... " -R D. Ranade, A *Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy* (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1968), pp. 222-23.

'One should uplift oneself by oneself' is exactly of the form' 'One should lift oneself by oneself.' Does that make any sense? Can anybody physically lift oneself by oneself? Lifting requires two things, the lifter and the lifted. What is the propriety of saying, then, that 'One should, or ought to, uplift oneself by oneself'? 'Ought' implies 'can'. It does not make any sense to ask anyone to do what he certainly cannot. Is 'उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानम्', then, devoid of sense? Not only that it is not nonsense buf that it has a far-reaching profound significance becomes clear if we bear in mind the general trend of the teaching Sri Krishna imparts to Arjuna. Sri Krishna entreats Arjuna (elsewhere in Gita) to take refuge in Him and that. He will free him of all sins.

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

If 'उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानम्' is interpreted literally, it directly contradicts 'मामेकं शरणं व्रज.,' since, in that case, we shall have to say that Sri Krishna advised Arjuna to take refuge in Sri Krishna and also (2) to take refuge in himself. The only way of resolving this apparent contradiction is to presume that 'अहं' ('Me') in whom Arjuna is asked to take refuge (in the latter statement) by Sri Krishna and the ' Ātman (Self) in whom also he is asked to take refuge (in the former statement) are identical. But how can Sri Krishna *as an individual* be identical with Arjuna *as an individual?* The identity can be understood only if it is interpreted as the identity *of essence,* and not as the identity *between two individuals.* Sri Krishna asks Arjuna to uplift himself spiritually by taking refuge in the all-pervading essence (God) who is the inner controller

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of all beings and who dwells in the heart of Arjuna as well as in the hearts of every being.

Thus ' one should uplift oneself by oneself ' means that 'one should uplift *oneself* (the individual) by one's ' *Self* ' (i.e., by surrendering to the will of the Lord within one's heart.)' Interpreted this way, 'उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानम्' is a gospel of self-surrender to the Divine within (which is infinite existence, knowledge and bliss), as well as a gospel of self-effort. Real self-effort consists in making ourselves (i.e our ego) effortless and let the Divine Will operate freely without any inhibition on the part of our tiny little self.(2)

Then ultimately we would know that this individual ego is an illusion and that only the Real Self (God) or Brahman is the only Reality. (3)

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2. " Suppose there is a feast in a house and the master of the house puts a man in charge of the stores. As long as the man remains in the store-room, the master does not go there; but when, of his own will, he renounces the store - room, and goes away, then the master locks it and takes charge of it himself.
" A guardian is appointed only for a minor. A boy cannot safeguard his property; therefore the king assumes responsibility for him. God does not take over our responsibilities unless we renounce our ego". Sri Ramkrishna, M., *The Gospel of Sri Ramkrishna, trans.* Swami Nikhilananda (Madras Sri. Ramakrishna Math, 1974) p.771.

3. " Two birds of beautiful plumage, inseparable companions, sat upon the same tree, one on the top and one below. The beautiful bird below was eating the fruit of the tree, sweet and bitter, one moment a sweet one and another a bitter. The moment he ate a bitter fruit, he was sorry, but after a while he ate another and when it too was bitter he looked up and saw the other bird who ate neither the sweet nor the bitter, but was calm and majestic, immersed in his own glory. And

poor lower bird forgot and went on eating the sweet and bitter fruits again until at last he ate one that was extremely bitter; and then he stopped again and once more looked up at the glorious bird above. Then he came nearer and nearer to the other bird; and when he had come near enough, rays of light shone upon him and enveloped him, and he saw he was transformed into the higher bird, He became calm, majestic, free and found that there had been but one bird all the time on the tree. The lower bird was but the reflection of the one above. So we are in reality one with the Lord, but the reflection makes us seem many, as when the one sun reflects in a million dew-drops and seems a million tiny suns. The reflection must vanish if we are to identify ourselves with our real nature which is divine." — Swami Vivekananda. *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol. I* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1962), PP. 339-40,

* * *

MIND YOUR MIND

Dr. B. R. Modak.
Karnatak University, Dharwar.

(1) The Human Mind

Mind is the inner sense (*antaḥ-karaṇa*) which collects and co-ordinates the different sensations received through the various senses, and thus obtains full knowledge regarding an object. The colour and form seen by the eye, the sound heard by the ear, the smell perceived by the nose, the taste known through the tongue and the touch understood through the skin-all these are recorded by the mind in form of impressions. When these latent impressions are aroused, they are called memory. It is on the basis of the memory of past experience that the mind decides the future course of action. The mind is superior to the other senses because whereas the other senses are limited to the present, the mind can remember the past, understand the present and think about the future. The mind takes a decision regarding the work to be done and directs the senses to do their respective jobs. Thus mind is the master and senses are its servants.

The mind functions when a man is awake. It functions also when he is dreaming. The mind is at rest when a man is

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in the state of deep sleep. When a man is meditating, the mind becomes absorbed in the Ātman. Thus *jāgrat*, *svapna*, *suṣupti* and *turīya* are the four states of mind.

It is said in the Chāndogya upaniṣad (6.6. 1-2) that the mind is formed from the subtlest part of the food eaten. Just as butter is produced from the subtle part of the curds which is churned, so is the mind produced from the subtle parts of the food that is digested. This would imply that one should eat pure food to keep his mind pure. (See Bhagavad-gītā. 17-8)

(2) The Mind of Mind.

The Ātman is described as the mind of mind (*manaso manaḥ*) in the kena Upaniṣad (1-2). This is so because the mind is inert (*jaḍa*) by nature, but being pervaded by the Ātman, It is able to function. It gets its capacity for thinking, feeling and willing from the *Ātman* only. The mind is controlled internally by the *Ātman*, which is therefore called *antaryāmi* (the inner controller) But the mind does not ordinarily know this (Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 3.7.20). In fact it is the *Ātman* only which perceives through the mind. Hence the *Ātman* is called *mano-jyoti* (Br. Upa. 3.9. 10-17). Just as the image reflected in a mirror depends upon the object in front of it, so is the mind dependent on the *Ātman* for its very existence. When an iron-ball is red-hot, we say that it burns our fingers. In fact it is the fire in the ball that burns, but not the ball itself. Similarly the perceiving capacity, belongs to the *Ātman* and not to the mind (Śaṅkarācārya's Upadeśasāhasrī 18.32-33, 86-87). The mind is said to be the divine eye (*daivam cakṣuh*) of the *Ātman*, through which it perceives (chā, Upa 8-12 - 5). The *Ātman*, which is unmanifest, becomes revealed through the *Vṛtti* of the mind (Śāṅkarabhāsya on Muṇḍaka Upa 2-2-8).

(3) Mind your Mind.

It is said in the Brahma-bindu Upaniṣad (verse 2) that the mind is the cause for the bondage as well as release of man. When the mind is attached to the objects of pleasure, it leads to bondage; but when it is detached, it leads to emancipation. Just as the clouds are brought by the wind and also driven away by the wind, so is bondage caused by the mind and also removed by the mind (Śakar cārya's Viveka-cūdāmaṇi verse 174).

It was noted above that the mind is the master and the senses are its servants. But sometimes the position becomes topsy-turvy. The senses overpower the mind and take it astray. The mind is carried away by the senses, just as a boat is carried away in water by the wind (Bhagavadgītā 2-67).

The mind becomes impure due to desires, anger, pride, hatred, jealousy, greed, anxiety, fear and worry. Hence it is necessary to keep a strict watch on your mind. Purification of the mind is to be attained through worship, prayer, fasting, penance, gifts and study of scriptures etc. The practice of virtues like non-violence, truth, non-stealing, continence, non-possession and contentment also purify the mind. Discrimination (*viveka*) regarding the eternal and the non-eternal dispassion (*vairāgya*) in respect of the enjoyments here and hereafter, forbearance, perseverance, faith and a desire for emancipation – all these are essential to purify the mind.

It is necessary to maintain the peace and equipoise of mind to make progress on the spiritual path. This can be done by keeping the mind above the dualities such as pain and pleasure, profit and loss, victory and defeat. One should not exult when one gets something desirable, nor should one be dejected when something undesirable takes place. Thus the equanimity of the mind is to be kept up (Bhagavadgītā 2-55-57; 5 - 19-20).

The mind is very fickle by nature, but it can be made steady through constant practice and detachment. This is of course a slow and gradual process. As the mind becomes more and more steady in the *Ātman*, it loses the *vāsanās* (impressions) relating to the external objects; and when all the *vāsanā-s* are lost, the realisation of the *Ātman* takes place without any hindrance (Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi 277). Hence you should mind your mind by fixing it in the Mind of mind.

आत्मसंस्थं मन: कृत्वा
न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत् ।
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* * *

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MY ENCOUNTER WITH GURUDEVA RANADE

Prof. B. B. Lal: Simla.

It was January 1957. In connection with my work I was camping at Bijapur, along with Shri M. N. Deshpande. On an off-day, he went to Nimbal. The next day when I went to pick him up and was returing from Nimbal, two persons of the Ashrama asked for and were given a lift in our vehicle. They were seated on a back row. From behind came the dialogue; One of them said, " An American Journalist had come and interviewed Professor Radha Krishnan, Shri J. Krishnamurty and Professor Ranade, putting the same question to all of them, Viz ' What do you believe in,? " The person went on to add, " While Professor Radha Krishnan and Shri Krishnamurty gave some other answers. that of Professor Ranade was, ' i don't believe, I perceive. "

The dialogue went on further eulogizing Gurudeva Ranade. However, my imagination had already been fired by the reply. I took the earliest opportunity to go to Nimbal once again and sought an interview with professor Ranade, which he graciously granted. " Do your disciples, like disciples of all other *gurus*, keep on eulogizing you as a matter of course or is there any truth about the interview which you are alleged to have granted to an American journalist," I asked The frail old man smiled, but gave no reply. When I insisted on a reply, he gave an affirmative nod.

I then picked up the thread: " Perceive is a transitive verb," I said. "It *Must* have an object." The smiling old man again nodded his head. I added, " If that be so, there must also be a method of perception. " There was again quietude on the part of the Professor. All that he said , "Read my boy, read and you would get to know the answer ," This did not satisfy me, I went on. " If you with your frail body can claim to perceive ' something' (as I put it), why can't I ? After all, I too have a body and a mind, just as you have." Nothing but an amused smile was the reaction.

The next day I was asked by a senior inmate of the Ashrama, "What name of God do you like or believe in? " I don't believe in God, much less in any particular name". "Don't you utter any name of God when in difficulty ?" came a supplementary question. "Well, there is no constancy about it. Sometimes I even say, ' Ya Allah." I don't know what reaction it produced on the enquirer.

I then learnt that I could be initiated, if I wanted. I really did'nt know if I wanted to be. I consulted my wife who was with me all through. She expressed all sorts of apprehensions. We called on Gurudeva once again and I told him about mY wife's apprehensions, " She is afraid, " I told Gurudeva. " that the Guru might become angry it she, after getting initiated, did not continue with what was prescribed". And I hurriedly added: "I don't regard a G uru to be worth his salt if he gets annoyed and makes some ill befall a disciple Just because he or she does not continue to follow him (the Guru). Guru is said be the *avatāra* of God and God is said be all kind-

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S. R. NALAWADE.
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ness. Thus, if a Guru gets annoyed he is no Guru at all." I had displayed my skill at logic. Gurudeva had nothing but a sweet smile on his face, which further reflected a sense of forgiveness even for my harsh words. "My wife has another apprehension, Sir," I went on: " Other *pūjas* are forbidden during certain parts of the month in the case of ladies. How would then she go on practising during this period what you prescribe ?"

"Do you think God ceases to exist during certain periods ?" was the simple but penetrating reply.

" Anyway, let us give the thing a trial, " my wife end I agreed to decide. We don't know where exactly we are today in the journey. In any case, if I were to meet Gurudeva Ranade once again, I would not be able to repeat, " If you with the same bones and flesh can perceive .... why can't I ?" If nothing else, the ego has somewhat lessened (although to say this is also to inflate once ego- Would I be forgiven for this ?)

* * *

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नामजप आणि सद्गुरु

डॉ. (सौ.) मंदाकिनी पट्टण.

मला नेहमी थोडे फार जप करण्याचे वेड आहे. जप करीत असतांना माझ्या अंगांत थरथरल्या सारखे होते. जणू कांहीं विद्युत संचार झाल्यासारखी भावना होते. शरीर हलत असते. आत कांहीतरी फिरायला लागते. हे मला संपूर्ण जाणवते. मी डॉक्टर असल्यामुळे प्रत्येक गोष्टीचे विश्लेषण करायची संवय आहे. हे थरथरणे मी भगवद्गीता वाचायला घेतल्यावर वाढू लागली. त्यामुळे मी फार बेचैन झाले. श्री रोहित मेहता, हे थिऑसॉफिकल सोसायटीमध्यें आले असतां मी त्यांना या बाबतींत विचारले. त्यांनी त्यावेळां विचारिले, “ आपण गुरु केलात कां ”? मी म्हटले, नाहीं; “तर आपण जप करु नका. कारण तुमची चक्रे जागृत होताहेत. ही चक्रे कंट्रोल करण्यासाठी गुरु असावे लागतात. तुम्हां जप करणे किंवा भगवद्गीता वाचणे सोडून द्या.” असे त्यांनी सांगतले. दुसऱ्या दिवशी सकाळी माझ्या सर्व अंगात विद्युत संचार झाल्याप्रमाणे झाले. मी फार व्याकुळ झाले. श्री महालक्ष्मीचा फोटो मी खाली काढून पाटावर ठेवला. पूजा केली आणि जगदंबेला प्रार्थना केली कीं तूंच मला सांग, मी काय करु? माझ्या मनाची विलक्षण तडफड झाली. क्षणमात्र देवीच्या फोटोंत हालचाल जाणवली. तेवढयात माझी मुलगी किरण धावत आली व म्हणाली, स्वामीजी (श्री शंकराचार्य कांचीमठ) श्री महालक्ष्मी मंदीराकडे जात आहेत. लगेच मी देवाला म्हणाले— “ आई तू मला स्वामीजींच्या कडून आदेश देणार असशील तर मी त्यांच्याकडे जाते.”

मी धावत धावत श्री लक्ष्मीमंदीराकडे गेले. स्वामीजी देवीच्या पुढे हात जोडून ऊभे होते. त्यांनी एक प्रदक्षिणा घातली. माझ्यातले थरथरणे इतके वाढले कीं मी जवळ जवळ कोसळणारच असे वाटले.

मी श्री दिगंबर परुळेकरांना म्हटले मला स्वामिजीना भेटायचे आहे. ते बोलतील कां? ते म्हणाले, “ बाई पुढे व्हा; त्याना लहर लागलं तर बोलतील.” स्वामीजी गाभाऱ्याच्या मागच्या बाजूला बसले होते. मी जावून नमस्कार केला व म्हणाले “मी श्री महालक्ष्मीच्या आज्ञेनें आपल्याकडे आले आहे. मी जप करु की नको”? श्री स्वामीजी मला पाहताच पाठ फिरवून बसले होते. मला तर उभे राहवत नव्हते. “मी जप करु की नको मला सांगा.” असे म्हटल्यावर स्वामीजी माझ्याकडें तोंड फिरवून बसले. क्षणभर माझ्याकडें पाहिले. एक मिनिट खाली मान घालून विचार केला. मग खुणेनें सांगितले कर–कर तू जप, आणि हात वर करुन हसून आशिर्वाद दिला. मी त्याना साष्टांग नमस्कार केला व घरी परतले. हा श्री स्वामीजींचा आशिर्वाद समजून मी आजही थोडेसे नामस्मरण करते. आजही ते थरथरणे आहेच. पण मनाला समाधान वाटते.

त्यानंतर २९ आक्टोबर १९७९ ची घटना. वेळ संध्याकाळी ६ वाजणची. मी गुरुदेव रानडे मंदिरच्या लायब्ररीमध्ये पुस्तक बदलून घ्यासाठी गेले होते. पुस्तक बदलून मी खाली आले तर कांही जण परगांवची माणसे गुरुदेवांची आरती करीत होते. आरती चालू असताना सोडून जाणे बरे नाहीं म्हणून मी त्याच ठिकाणी थांबले. त्यापैकी एका बाईने मला खुणेने गाभाऱ्यांत बोलाविले. मीही एका कोपऱ्यांत हात जोडून ऊभी राहिले. माझे लक्ष वृंदावनाकडे होते.

पाहतां पाहतां मी कुठे आहे हेच मला समजेना. कारण मी एका खडकावर उभी होते. गुरुदेव डाव्या बाजूनें एका तळयांत पाय धुवून पायऱ्या चढून वरती येत होते. त्यांच्या हातात काहींतरी होते. ते सरळ वृंदावनाजवळ आले. त्यांनी सहजपणे ते ऊचलून बाजूला

ठेवले. मला फार आश्चर्य वाटले. कारण एवढे वजन सहजपण त्यांनी कसे उचलले? हातांत असलेलें कापड म्हणा, फडके म्हणा (काळपर जांभळया रंगाचे) झटकले, खाली अंथरले व त्यावर बसून गुरुदेव ध्यानमग्न झाले. इतके सर्व प्रत्यक्ष मी पाहिले. फिरून एकदा मला आरतीचे सूर ऐकू आले. मी गाभाऱ्यांतच आहे; वृंदावन जागच्या जागींच आहे. सर्वजण आरती करीतच होते.

ही मी प्रत्यक्ष पाहिलेली घटना आहे. त्यानंतर मी श्री नाना परुळेकर यांना ही घटना सांगितली. त्यावेळी त्यांनी एकेकाळी ही घटना घडली होती म्हणून सांगितलें. श्री गुरुदेव मंदिरात आहेत; निश्चित आहेत असें मी त्यांच्याकडे बोललें.

त्यानंतर ३०-११-७९ रोजी मी गुरुदेव मंदिरात गेले. गुरुदेवांचे दर्शन घ्यावे अशी ओढ लागला होती. मी गेले, हात जोडले, फिरून एकदा मी खडकावर ऊभी आहे असे दिसले. अगदी दूरवर एक मोडके तुटके जुने दगडी कंपाऊंड होते. त्या कंपाऊंडच्या कडने गुरुदेव जात होते. मी हात जोडले आणि फिरुन एकदां मी गाभाऱ्यांतच ऊभी आहे. हे दुसरे दर्शन गुरुदेवांचे घडले. त्यानंतर मात्र मला गुरुदेवांचे दर्शन घ्यावे असे वेड लागले. ही घटना ३०-११-७९. च्या संध्याकाळची आहे.

टीप :– गुरुवार ता. १३-११-१९७९ रोजो डॉ. सौ. पट्टण गुरुदेव मंदिरला आल्या. त्यांचे बरोबर त्यांचे पति डॉ. पट्टण हे ही होते. श्री. नाना–साहेब परुळेकर आले होते. “गुरुदेव, तुम्हीच हा मंत्र दिला आहे. अशा भावनेनें मी जप करीत रहाते.” अशी त्यानी प्रार्थना केली. नाम जपास अर्धातास बसून नंतर आरती केली व त्या घरी परत गेल्या.

REVIEW

Bendre : Work and Personality (Kannada) by R. Venkatesh, Kannada Writer, Talakad. Published by Vishva Samaja Publications, Talakad. Pages: 48 Price: 1-25.

The purpose of this booklet under review is to thrash out the unsympathetic and harsh criticism of Sri Bendre's Poetry coming from a few enthusiastic but prejudiced writers. The author reacts strongly to such criticism and enters into correspondence with Dr. G. S. Shivarudrappa, the Head of the Dept of Kannada, Bangalore University. The author has carefully examined the views expressed by the participants in a symposium on Bendre organised by the Bangalore University. He is justified in expressing his highest admiration for Bendre's personality and contribution to kannada poetry. Sri Bendre is undoubtedly one of the most eminent and gifted poets in kannada recognised on account of his unique contibution. He is a pace- setter in modern kannada poetry having a large number of followers. His poetry is born out of his rich experience and rare insight into human life. The author rejects the harsh remarks passed by the young critics who do not possess the requisite qualifications to judge the worth and beauty of Bendre's poetry He thinks that these remarks are based on misunderstanding and prejudices against Sri Bendre and his poetry. None can afford to deny that Sri Bendre richly deserves sympathetic understanding and admiration which the author has exhibited. In doing so he has shown the courage and impartiality. So the author's views are worthy of carful consideration.

K. D. Tangod.

REVIEW

Manjushree (Kannada) - A Sovenir in memory of Vishwakalyana Samithi. : Hon. Editor: Dr. Sri H. H. Siddhamallikarjuna Swamiji, Hastikerimutt. Editor: R. Venkatesh, Published by Vishwakalyana Samithi, Hastikerimutt, Talakad. Pages: 38

The Sovenir under review though Small in bulk is yet valuable It is brought out in order to introduce to the public the Vishwakalyana Samithi and its progress during a short period of three years since its inception in 1976. It is a useful collection of ten thought - provoking articles. Two of them introduce to the readers the Vishwakalyana Samithi and the holy place Talakad. The remaining few impress on them the need for world-peace and world-good in the present circumstances that have led to the fear of world-war. We are happy to note that the founders of the Vishwakalyana Samithi have placed before them a variety of noble objectives such as spread of knowledge and religion, service of the poor and down-trodden and otner activities, all directed towards the welfare of the world. In this connection the Hindu belief that the world-peace and world-good can be realised through religious awakening and peace and good of one's own self is upheld. The lengthy article by the editor broadly surveys the present situation in all spheres of human life and suggests what we are yet to achieve in these spheres. The article strikes a note of humility in not claiming finality to the views expressed by the editor It only claims to stimulate unprejudiced and independent thinking on human problems. The erring man is advised to realise his mistakes and march forward by correcting them. The last article explains clearly the vital role that a woman can play in today's society. It rightly points out that a woman can prove equal to man in all respects. She is neither weak nor incapable as is generally supposed. The significant prayer at the beginning rightly asserts that we need the help and grace of God, the merciful in saving ourselves from the human weaknesses hampering our growth and in developing the virtues that promote our full growth as well.

The Vishwakalyana Samithi deserves our hearty congratulations for bringing out this valuable sovenir.

K. D. Tangod.

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LIFE OF SHRI GURUDEO RANADE

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(Continued from the previous Number
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Chapter Three

FROM QUEST TO CONQUEST.

Gurudeo Ranade in his monumental work on Maharashtra saints, which he undertook as a result of a dream warning, that Dnyaneswar and Tukaram were very much angry with him in the year 1908 A. D, dived deep into the ocean of the spiritual literature of Samarth Ramdas and others. He writes- "All saints, both Indian and Christian, have laid stress upon the efficacy of the Name (of God) in fulfilling the ambitions of the spiritual aspirant. The driving power, however, for spiritual life is given by meditation on God ... ".

"We should never forget God's Name, whether we may be merged in happiness or in sorrow, in dejection or in anxiety, at the time of joy and at the time of calamity .. .. Whenever difficulties overtake us, whenever we are down with the worries of life, we should meditate on the Name of God ..... By the Name of God, all our difficulties are dispelled, and all our calamities swept away. The demons and goblins,

the spirits and ghosts, have no power before a devout meditation on God's Name. ... ... God, he says, ever holds the keys of success in His hands. God is the protector of all beings and of all worlds ...... Where God is not, one would meet with Death. Without God there can be no life ... ... Meditation gives us great support; without it we cannot get victory in any work that we undertake. Where God is not present to support us, we would be routed by anybody whatsoever. No undertaking can succeed unless it is backed up by the presence of God. "
(M, M. pp. 399-400)

Already, in chapter second, we have seen that young Rambhau, on account of the persuasive pressure of Prof. Wodehouse, had gone to Varanasi (Benaras) and met Mrs Annie Beasant. During his stay there, the young Ranade one evening visited the mutt of Shankaracharya and observed the recital of Devotional Songs. As a result, the young scholar was in a dilemma to reconcile the Adwaita Philosophy of Shankara with his devotional prayers. This basic dilemma drove him to the study of Indian Philosophy.

Deadly Disease of the Brain :-

But, unfortunately for him, his quest for a solution to this diametrically opposite way of thought in the great Adwaita Philosopher, Shri. Shankaracharya was hampered by the sudden and serious illness that besieged his frail physique. When he was only twentythree, he was a sudden victim of a serious brain tuberculosis known in medical terminology as ' Cerebral Pthysis. ' Because the young Ranade was very much liked and admired by all the European Professors at the Deccan College owing to his extraordinary intellectual capacities, they arranged to get him examined by specialised and expert medical doctors at the European Hospital, and even had made arrangements for his stay and treatment there.

But. young Rambhau, whose heart was deeplye mbedded in the Divine Name and his Spiritual Master, did not agree with their request, nor did he comply with their proposal to stay at the European Hospital for treatment. Thereafter he shifted his residence from Deccan College Hostels to the rented rooms in the city of Poona at the Wada (वाडा) or a big house of Shri. Godbole. There he took the Ayurvedic treatment of Maharshi Annasaheb Patwardhan and Shri. Balashastry Lagvankar. Gurudeo told me the details about this illness with a unique sense of gratefulness for his spiritual Master and an unfathomable efficacy of meditation on the Divine Name.

Some vital events in his noble life, saturated with Divine Name. are treasured in the innermost vaults. A few of the details are being exposed in this biography as a matter of necessity. As Gurudeo has written in his Path Way to God in Hindi literature, रतन भरी कोठरी वार वार मतखोल । जव मिलेगा जोहरी तभी चढेगा मोल । "A room may be full of diamonds, but the owner must not open it from time to time. It is only when a great jeweller comes that the value of the jewels may come to light. " Accordingly, I have to exercise a check on my emotions, while depicting the inner life of Gurudeo. In this connection, of his serious trouble of braint uberculosis,i t would be very difficult to detect the causes of his deadly disease. One apparent reason might be his serious preoccupation with mathematics at his B, A. in 1907 His library contained almost all the important books of the various branches of mathematics from all over the world. He had solved practically all problems personally. This must have caused a great tension and strain on the delicate apparatus of his brain. Initially he took the Ayurvedic treatment of Maharshi Annasaheb Patwardhan. His chief medicine was the Name of God. His Sanskrit teacher, Shri. Athavale Shastri had written to him a letter to contemplate on Om or Rama Nama with deep breathing, But, Gurudeo always meditated on the Name given to him by his Sadguru.

He once told that Bajirao the first had an attack of a similar disease of brain and the forefathers of Shri. Balashastri Lagavankar had treated the Ist Bajirao and cured him. Hence, the hereditary transmission of typical and patent Ayurvedic treatment of his forefathers was known only to Bal Shastry Lagavankar. Hence, he took the young Ranade. under his medical treatment with a unique confidence but with the perfect attitude of a devotee. He used to say that 'Dava Mera! Daya Tera' (दवा मेरा! दया तेरा). ' Medicine is human but the efficacy of the medicine is Divine '.

While young Rambhau was staying at Gedbole Wada, his young friend and student Shri. Baburao Mhaiskar read out to Gurudeo all the eighteen chapters of Bhagawadgita in only three days On the third day when he opened the book of Gita, he noticed the following 58th varse of 18th chapter of Bhagawadgita and Gurudeo felt at heart that it was a divine message for him in the midst of his deadly disease.

" मच्चित्तः सर्वदुर्गाणि मत्प्रसादात्तरिष्यसि ॥
अथ चेत्त्वमहंकारान्न श्रोष्यसि विनंक्ष्यसि ॥

Dr. Radhakrishnan in his translations writes, " Fixing Thy thought on Me, Thou Shalt, by my Grace, cross over all difficulties, but if from Self-conceit, thou wilt not listen (to Me), thou shalt Perish. " Man is free to choose salvation or perdition. If we fondly believe that we can resist the will of the Almighty, we will come to grief. Defiance of God is due to self-sense (Ahankara) and it is powerless ultimately. With this attitude of complete surrender young Rambhau merged himself in the meditation on the Divine Name. His mother was extremely anxious for the health of her Son. The young wife, Smt. Sitabai who was a life companion of young Gurudeo, must have been a helpless prey of vicarious suffering. It was only the unseen power of meditation on the spiritual Name by the holy mother and the devout Son, that was the sure source of relief, His mother used to wake him up for morning meditation inspite of his illness. She said ' रामू ऊठ, जेवढा होईल तेवढा नेम कर, मग पुन: वाटेल तर नीज, पण ही वेळ घालवूं नकों ' "Oh my child Ramu, get up, meditate on Divine Name, as this is the most precious time in the early hours of morning." In Marathi it is called 'Ramprahara' (रामप्रहर), the time of Divine Rama, or the period of spiritual flowering. (Thees exact words of his mother were reported by Gurudeo while narrating about his deadly disease).

One day, early in the morning when young Rambhau was sitting for his meditation, he heard the ringing of the bell. He felt that the bell might be ringing at the time of the Pooja or worship of Johari Mahadeo (जोहारी महादेव) nearby. But, just to ascertain the facts he requested his mother to see personally if the bell is ringing in the nearby temple of Johari Mahadeo (जोहारी महादे।). On verification by the mother, it was found that there was no worship going on in such early hours of morning, nor was there any ringing of the bells. Then, he was inclined in his heart to feel that it might be an unstruck sound of spiritual bells. Accidentally on that day,his eyes fell upon a book, published by Vani- Vilas Press, named 'Yogataravali' (योगतारावली), by the great Adwaita philosopher, shri. Shankaracharya. When he opened the book, he noticed the following two verses :

१) सदाशिवोक्तानि सपादलक्ष– । लयावधानानि वसंति लोके ।।
नादानुसंधान समाधिमेकं । मन्यामहे मान्यतमं लयानाम् ।।

" There are a lac and a quarter methods of concentration, 'Laya' (लय), on the Divine, propounded by God Shankara. Amongst all these processes, the spiritual concentration through the mental pursuit of Divine Sound is the most important and efficacious of all the methods, says the great Shankaracharya."

२) नादानुसंधान नमोऽस्तु तुभ्यं । त्वां साधनं तत्त्वपदस्य मन्ये ।।
भवत्प्रसादात् पवनेन साकं । विलीयते विष्णुपदे मनो मे ।।

" Oh Thou one-pointed Attention, (Anusandhān) अनुसंधान- on Spiritual Sound ! I bow to Thee. Thou art the medium to acquaint me with the Basic Reality (Brahmatmabhava) ब्रह्मात्मभाव- of the Divine, With the help of my respiration, I merge in the Divinity (Holy feet of God Vishnu) along with Thee and entirely because of Thy Grace and Thy spiritual instrumentality.,'

Later, he wrote an Essay in Marathi after a critical study of Yoga-Taravali (योगतारावली) under the caption, "The Self- realisation of Shri Shankaracharya (श्री शंकराचार्यांचा आत्मसाक्षात्कार) and the Chitramaya jagat (चित्रमय जगत्) publishers of Poona, published the same in the year 1918. In that essay young Gurudeo writes, "For Shankaracharya to have an experience of Self-Realisation, he had to take recourse to the spiritual course of concentrated attention (Anusandhan) on spiritual sound, for attaining complete assimilation of his mind with the Divine Power. For the sake of Self-Realisation, mere application of intellectual methods were not sufficient even for the great (Adwaitin) Shankaracharya. He had to take recourse to the path of Raja-Yoga for Self-Realisation.

Spiritual Meditation

Before taking up the work of giving English summaries of Gurudeo's letters to the saint of Umadi in this period, I have to bring to the notice of the readers one most important factor that added substantially to the spiritual life of Gurudeo. He himself used to refer to these events with a deep sense of gratitude and spiritual obligation. Two other devoted disciples of the saint of Umadi, (1) Shri. Malharpant Joshi and (2) Shri Lingappa Savalgi, were staying in the Poona City. Though they were studying in different Colleges they were coming together for their spiritual meditation every day in the evening Gurudeo used to tell with a feeling of gratification that his first lessons in disciplined spiritual meditation (Kattacha Nema कट्टाचा नेम) were imbibed by him from the contact and company of the above two disciplined devotees of the saint of Umadi. When once Gurudeo happened to go to the house of Malharpant Joshi in the City, he was surprised to see that these two persons were sitting erect in a definite pose with their gaze fixed on the tip of the nose (Bhrumadhya- भ्रमध्य) between the two eye-brows and were remembering the Divine name continuously in the rhythmical ascent and descent of the vital breath. This is just a rough pen-picture of the disciplined meditation on the name of God. Shri. Amburao Baba also was very particular about such a disciplined meditation (Kattacha Name). He exhorted his disciples at the time of initiation that the spiritual Nama imparted by the Guru should be mentally fused or welded with the stream of inhaling and exhaling current of breath, As a remedy to drive away extraneous thoughts. Shri. Baba used to ask the devotees to leave no vacant gaps in the current of the breath. The spiritual Name imparted by the spiritual master should be continuously and unabatedly stitched with the stream of the breath. One of the senior devotees of Shri. Maharaj, Shri. Sayyadali Saheb, or popularly known as Kabirsaheb, from Village Chimmad near Jamkhandi, used to quote the following Hindi lines regarding meditation.

ओठ न हाले, कंठ न हाले, मूंसे मत् कहो राम ।
राम हमारा जप करे । हम बैठे आराम । मकडी के जाल में
तंता चढते उतरते दमकी खबर रखो । मेहरवान् ।

"Without moving your lips and the sound-box in the throat, and without muttering aloud the spiritual Name with the tongue, the meditation of the Divine Name should reflexively go on in the breath. The divinity or the invisible Rāma within us goes on remembering the divine Name, and the Divine Self in the body should joyfully watch the process of meditation ! Just as the spider goes up and down the thread that it weaves out of its mouth through its saliva, so also the devotee should be watchful of his thread of breath and see that, not a single breath is wasted without the rememberance of the Divine Name. Similarly the great saint Dnyāneswara writes in his Haripātha ज्ञाददेवा मौन जपमाळ अंतरी । धरोनि श्रीहरी जपे सदा॥ ' Dnyāndeva is silent, and Shri. Hari or God within, is meditating on the Divine Name with the internal rosary of breath in his hand.'

In this way the two great devotees of Shri. Maharaj, Shri. Malharpant Joshi and Lingappā Sāvalgi used to utilise their time in spiritual meditation. Shri Lingappa Savalgi was a student at the Agricultural college, Poona and was a rigid disciplinarian in point of regulated spiritual meditation. Even the saint of Umadi ranked him as a first class devotee. Unfortunately, he had a premature death in 1915 due to Diphtheria. His sense of evaluation was indeed peculiar and striking. Because, his spiritual master read Dāsbodh, Dnyāneswari and Bhagawadgitā he revered them as great scriptures. So, his devotion and respect for every thing else in the world was measured through the greatness of his Guru. In one of his letters to Gurudeo, dated 23rd August 1910. he writes, " The joy and happiness yon derive in the company of the spiritual master, cannot be had in the company of friends and relatives and even that of mother and father ...... For, the words of my Guru are more valuable and authoritative than those of Vedās, Geetā and other commentaries ...... I am sure because I have experienced that our Maharaj has spiritual vision (Darshana –दर्शन) spiritual contact, (Sparshan-स्पर्शन) and spiritual conversation (Sambhāshana-संभाषण) and he is playing like a child with his Real Self viz. with our (Aparoksha Guru) 'Invisible Guru.' I value Geetā and Dāsbodh only because they state what our Maharaj tells. Only four sentences of my Guru summarise the 18 chapters of Bhagawat-Geetā."

Whenever he used to go to Poona from Kudachi Railway Station, Shri Lingappā Sāvalagi used to sit for meditation with his blanket covering his face and body at Kudachi Station and he used to get out of his meditation only at Poona Station the next morning. So, the young Ranade once said with confidence that his real meditation on Divine Name began on 24th December 1909 in the background of genuine and sublime spiritual experiences giving him glimpses of spiritual bliss. All this was mainly on account of the close company and deep impression that both these friends left upon Gurudeo's mind during their common and disciplined meditation for long hours in Poona,

It is only the holy mother of Gurudeo who really witnessed the rare occasions of Gurudeo's intense meditation and his consequent spiritually exhilerating moments of bliss. On account of his acute ill-health Gurudeo used to sit on an easy chair and enjoy his spiritual bliss within himself. For others he was as if sleeping on an easy chair.

One day in 1909 the Saint of Umadi appeared in the dream of Gurudeo and asked him to read Shrimad Bhāgawat ('श्रीमद्-भागवत'). Then, Gurudeo read the whole of it in original Sanskrit. After some days when he met his Guru and told him about the dream, Shri. Maharaj said that it was a period of mental renunciation (Vairagya). Owing to his illness Gurudeo could not digest any food during this period from 1909 to 1910. He lived only on tea and milk. The spiritual form of the Divine Self, the Glory of God and the power of the

Providence, were the only three poles round which Gurudeo's life revolved in this period of terrible trial.

Gurudeo once showed me the letter he received from his spiritual colleague, the late Shri. Lingappă Săvalagi in 1910. I am giving below the original text of the letter for the benefit of the readers.

Wednesday 5th January 1910
at 9-15 A. M.

My dear Rambhau,

Am exceedingly glad to let you know one thing happened today.

I was solving one example in chemistry in the sunshine just in front of my room. While there were present some of my College students there, suddenly most brilliant, lustrous, shining figure, set with pearl-like small balls, appeared on the page of my chemistry as usual. I forgot solving the example and was deeply engaged in enjoying this most interesting figure. Accidentally, I remembered the Canerese song of a Yogi.

' कण्णु मुच्चिदरू काण वरतद प्रणवस्वरूपा '
(डोळे झांकले तरी प्रणवस्वरुप दिसतें.)

The spiritual form of 'Om' can be seen even with eyes closed. So, I raised my head towards the sun, closed the eyes tightly, when I saw the same figure on the interior part of my eye lash, Being overjoyed, I was laughing to myself surrounded by other students, who were perhaps laughing at my supposed stupidity.

You may rightly or wrongly call me an ignorant fellow, but I am at this moment inclined to say the following. I think that the universally acknowledged fact that, "God is everywhere" is not quite true.

God does not live in Heaven or at holy places or Kshetra. Nor does he live anywhere else. He lives before his Bhakta, devotee only.

My Gurumaharaj has today led me one step higher. No limits to my joy ! Today is holiday !

yours Sincerely,
L B. Savalagi.

Thus we can see from the above letter that the late and the great spiritual colleague of Gurudeo, Shri. Lingappā Sâvalgi was the specimen of a real devotee. Once Gurudeo saw him sitting on a table, placed right in the middle of the room to avoid drowsiness and was practising meditation all the night. All the three (1) Lingappā Sāvalgi (2) Malhārpant Joshi and (3) Gurudeo Ranade, were quite meticulous and strict disciples of Maharaj who attended to meditation on spiritual Năma continuously for a long time during long hours at night.

The unforseen deadly disease of ' Cerebral Pthysis,' or the tuberculosis of the brain cells, and the consequent physical disabilities, weakness, and mental anguish of Gurudeo and his mother were peculiar and uncommon. To compensate and maintain the balance and equilibrium of Gurudeo, the power of Divine Name and the glory of spiritual experiences mingled with each other in the holy prayăg of his devout heart. His life became the unique centre or spiritual confluence of spiritual Name, the spiritual master, and the Divine experience.

But, on human plane of life all the future hopes and aspirations of young Ranade shattered to pieces. His post-graduate studies were with held. Darkness had enveloped every branch of his intellectual career and academic pursuit. He could not read even a page. So, disciplined meditation (कट्टाचा नेम) on Divine Name was simply an impossibility for his weak body. But, his faith and his Bhăv (भाव), love for the Divinity in the heart, were robust and upsurging even in the midst of this utter despondency and desolate condition of brain, body and outer mind. Thus, it was a constant struggle or war, day and night, outside and inside. As the great Saint Tukaram has put it,
" रात्रंदिन आम्हां युद्धाचा प्रसंग । अंतर्बाह्य जग आणि मन ॥ "
The war was being waged day and night The external war was with the outside or worldly circumstances and the internal war was between his weak brain and anxious mind with the robust spiritual faith in the heart. Before this conflagration of the double-faced war could take a drastic turn, the young Gurudeo along with his holy mother went to the sanctifying presence of their spiritual master at Inchageri in 1910 in the month of Shrāvan. The whole month is a period of intense devotion to spiritual Name, Bhajan and regular discourses by the spiritual master.

Selected portions from young Gurudeo's letters (from 1906 to 1910) to his spiritual master the saint of Umadi.

On 28-7-1906, the young Rambhau, who had simply passed his Intermediate examination, wrote a letter to his spiritual master. The important portion from that letter is given below, duly translated in English.

"I feel that I should devote the entire portion of my remaining life to meditation on God's Name and in the holy company of saints. I only pray you to make me worthy of this. I am extremely worried due to my family woes. I beg of you to kindly see that I develop in my heart an attitude of renunciation and with the help of both renunciation and devotion, I should be able to progress on the Path of Wisdom".

"I know I am ignorant. There is not a bit of wisdom in me. Neither am I a poet nor a Pandit. The feeling of pride takes hold of me even from a small event, ... I realise that there is something wrong with me .... So, I shall be happy, if I know the exact nature of my defect. There is nobody who can point out my defects to me ...... Kindly give me shelter at thy feet."

Shri. Maharaj. who was perfectly rational in his spiritual pursuit, never gave any scope or encouragement to vague emotions, superstitions and poetical compositions etc.

The four dream-visions in which the saint of Umadi had appeared before young Rambhau in four consecutive dreams and tried to eradicate his sense of ego and pride about his own spirituality, have been already given in the previous chapter. And thus the young Gurudeo, realised that the awakening of his psychological drawbacks and deficiencies have helped him to improve and take to the right path.

On 12-2-1909 he wrote the following letter to Maharaj.

" I am immensely sorry that I am not able to fix my gaze owing to a sensation of giddiness. Medical treatment is of no avail ... : My incapacity to meditate on Nāma with deep faith has made me anxious about the probability of self-realisation. I am extremely anxious owing to the obstacles created by this disease in respect of my spiritual meditation. My desire to attend to meditation may kindly be fulfilled through your grace."

Again On 1-4-1909 he wrote the following letter to Maharaj. " Recently I am attending to spiritual meditation morning and evening. My attempts for meditation are thwarted by numerous difficulties. Day and night I have a feeling that I cannot do anything. Giddiness begins no sooner than the gaze is fixed. There is a sense of hollowness in my brain and head. These are great obstacles in my meditation. My repeated intense desire to meditate on Divine Name is set at naught by the wrath of Divinity, expressed through this disease. All medicines have been exhausted. Without the Grace of God and without the blessing of Saints, nothing is possible is my conviction. I feel shy to write all this to my great spiritual master. But, my feeling of identity with the body cannot be easily uprooted. My only prayer to you is to enable me to medit ate on the name of God with a fixed gaze." A reply to this was sent by Maharaj On 7-4-1909 from Inchageri .

" You may meditate on the Divine Name with your eyes completely closed. You can mentally fix your gaze on the top of the nose (Nāsāgrăvar). Thus your reeling sensation would be stopped. With a firm determination and a fixed posture (Kattāne) do attend to meditation as far as possible. Every moment of spare time should be utilised for spiritual contemplation on Divine Name. Constantly try to remember the Name of God in every breath. If you do like this you will regain your good health and all the obstacles and difficulties will be removed and you will rest in peace and joy.

हरिनामाच्या चिंतनें ।
बारा वाटा पळती विघ्नें ।।

With the contemplation on the name of God the difficulties will be dispelled forthwith. So also " अच्युतानंत गोविंद नामोच्चारण भेपजा । नश्यन्ति सकला रोगाः । सत्यं सत्यं वदाम्यहम् ।। "With the medicine of the remembrance and uttering of the Divine Names like Achuta, Ananta and Govinda. ell the diseases will be cured. This is a guarantee vouchsafed by the saints. This is a confirmed truth. आठव तो ब्रह्म । नाठव तो भवभ्रम ।। ' The remembrance of the Divine Name is like Brahman, and its forgetfulness is delusion'. The great Guru maharaj has exhorted you to grasp the spirit of this sentence and act upto it. For improvement of your health a small packet of powder (Pooda Prasāda), charged with Divine Grace, is sent herewith. Remember the above advice Please eat the powder. You need not be anxious. Everything will be alright and you will be happy." (From Nandeppa as directed by Maharaj)

On 7 5-1909 Gurudeo again wrote the following letter to his spiritual master.

" Still there is no stamina in the body and the brain. To the best of my capacity, I am remembering the Name of God day and night. I am struggling to fix my attention in Nāma. Occasionally, I visualise the blue digit of the moon. If my health improves and becomes normal, I desire to attend to meditation on Divine Name for one hour at least each time both in the morning and in the evening."

During his College days at Deccan College he was going to the classes of Lăthi and Bothăti-i. e. the preliminary art of handling the bamboo staff and cane - stick for self -defence. This training in self-discipline was then mooted with the basic concept of National service. But, later on, the Young Rambhau changed this basic attitude and felt that he can best serve the national cause only through his development of spiritual life, Thus his love for the National Cause also was instrumental in driving him towards Divinity. He felt that he can best serve the cause of the nation only through spiritual life, as his faith was, that, ultimately everything happens according to the Will of God and the Plan of the Providence. And, to attune oneself with God and Divine power, spiritual meditation on Divine Name is the only process.

Wnen once the saint of Umadi was camping at Sholapur the spiritual colleague of Gurudeo, Shri. Lingappa Săvalgi, suggested to him to go there and meet his spiritual master. But, owing to his extremely weak health, he could not do so. So with a feeling that his suffering is inevitable, he wrote to his master again on 22-7-1909.

" I am extremely sorry that I could not go out of Poona even for a day. I would have been gratified to be in the presence of my master. But, my misfortune is inevitable. It is only the Divine Name that can change the current of destiny. Owing to my foolishness and derth of genuine faith, I am unable to meditate on the DIvine Name, inspite of the exhortations of the Saints to that effect. No body else, other than the spiritual master, can make me worthy and able to attend to Divine Name. To detract me from wrong path and to remove my sloth and to give me energy and inspiration for meditation on Divine Name, the spiritual master alone is the worthy and the capable person. Hereafter I wish to visit your hallowed feet as early as possible."

Shri. Maharaj used to stay at Inchageri for the spiritual week in the month of Mārgasheersha (मार्गशीर्ष). Many devotees assembled then at Inchageri for the holy company of their spiritual master. So many spiritual well-wishers of young Rambhau suggested him to avail of this sanctifying opportunity. But, the disabled and ill-fated young Gurudeo could not do so, because of his extreme weakness. He could not hazard to take the shocks, and jerks of bullock cart journey from Nimbal to Inchageri. So, he wrote to his master thus on 23-12-1909.

"I am immensely sorry for my incapacity to go over to Inchageri. I am attending to meditation as far as physically possible. But, how can a clod of earth acquire the fragrance of Kasturi without its close company and contact? Just as the mother takes up the burden and care of her child without its knowledge, so also the ignorant devotee would remain uncared for and unattended unless and until he is in close company of his spiritual master. The company of the other saints might be useful like the attendance of nurses. But, the disciple cannot get the real happiness and help of his spiritual master without the vicinity of his Guru."

Just like saint Tukārām, the young Gurudeo had to face unforeseen physical ailments, family difficulties and the churning of mental impurities during this period. So he again wrote to his spiritual master on 12-7-1910 -

"I am experiencing continuous opposition of my mind in respect of spiritual meditation during the last six months. Owing to the impurities in the mind, many obstacles crop up during meditation ... ... Not only that I am unable to control my mind like others, but my mind is most impure. My mind cannot be cleansed of its impurities inspite of six months' struggle for spiritual meditation. There is no doubt that there is some growth in spiritual experiences. My mind is extremely sullied due to the deeds in this life and the destiny of the past life. I am simply maddened by the random nature of evil thoughts. Hence, I pray to your holy self, to show me a way out, to get rid of the impurities of my mind...... I have prayed for this and it is up to you to fulfil my prayers."

The peculiar psychological warfare, depicted in this letter, would certainly be an eye-opener for all the aspirants. that certain factors are beyond human control.

In the year 1910, when Shri. Bhausaheb Maharaj was camping at Sholapur in the house of Smt. Bayābāi Sohoni in the month of July. Gurudeo went there with his mother. At Sholapur, Rambhau was having the trouble of dysentery. Smt. Bayābāi offered some medicine, but Gurudeo asked Shri. Maharaj whether he should take her medicine or not ? Thereupon Shri. Maharaj said, ' God in human form. is giving you medicine. And then Gurudeo took it and he was cured. Then both the son and the mother accompanied Maharaj to Inchageri via Kumatha, Nimbal and Horti. Shri Maharaj. Gurudeo and his mother were travelling in the same tonga. During this journey in the tonga Gurudeo related the details of his spiritual experiences to Maharaj. Maharaj heard everything silently but did not express anything in response. At Nimbal Shri, Maharaj camped for two days at the house of Shri. Nadgouda and after two days camp at Horti, all reached Inchageri.

At Inchageri the mother of Rambhau told Maharaj all details about the disease of the brain of her son and began to weep out of a choked-up heart full of anxiety for the only son. Then maharaj, looking at the Spiritual Form in his front, compassionately told her that ' for sixty years, there is no fear of death for your son as God wants to get a lot of great spiritual work done at his hands.' Then, Shri. Maharaj initiated her with the Divine Name at her request.

Previously both Shri. Nandeppa and Smt. Parvatibai were initiated by a saint at Jamkhandi, Shri. Mahalingayya. Thereafter, shri. Nandeppa got again initiated by Shri. Maharaj in 1904. Then, he had asked Gurudeo's mother to take initiation from Maharaj, but then she had not agreed to his proposal. But, now because of the serious illness of her son she felt the urge to get initiated from Shri Bhausaheb Maharaj. And young Gurudeo was also happy at the initiation of his mother by Maharaj.

One day, on the way to Inchageri, while camping at Kumatha, Maharaj asked Gurudeo whether he could see the spiritual form or 'Vastu' on the flame of the lantern and when Gurudeo said yes, Maharaj was satisfied. This event took place when Maharaj, Gurudeo and his mother were travelling from Sholapur to Inchageri via Kumtha. So, this is a post-facto reference to a hiror incident after their stay at Inchageri and the initiation of Gurudeo's mother there. Similarly, when once there was a doubt in the mind of Gurudeo when a cat went across, Shri· Maharaj said that there is no ill-omen to the devotee of God, as he perceives his 'Vastu' – Spiritual form – even before that cat. So also Maharaj then reported an old occasion at Umadi, that was similar. Once, his elder brother Shri. Nanasaheb told him while going out for an important work, that he should not go out then, as a widow had confronted him, which is an ill-omen. Shri. Maharaj then replied to his elder brother that the presence of a widow with fire in her hand is not a bad-omen but an auspicious sign. 'गंगाभागीरथी ज्ञानाग्नि हातांत घेऊन समोर आला आहे. हा अपशकुन नाहीं. शुभ शकुनच आहे.'

Thus, the attitude of Maharaj was most rational and non-superstitious. His spiritual devotion was most rational and philosophical. There was no room for hallucination, superstition and hypocricy in his alert and non-dogmatic and uncompromising adherence to the spiritual Name initiated by the realised Sadguru. So also his interpretation of the miracles of Saint Dnyaneswara about his moving a wall (भिंत चालविणे) when Changadeo came to meet him, and his miracle of making a male-buffalo to utter the vedic Mantras in the presence of the Brahmins of Apegaon, were novel and rational. God works out miraculous events only within the range of natura possibilities for the sake of saints. आपण महंती न करिती । परी सर्वत्र चमत्कार होती । कां ते पुण्यमार्गे चालती । म्हणोनियां ।। (पंचसमासी २–७१–७२). ज्ञानास सिध्दीचा विटाळ । ऐसे वदती वेळोवेळ । परी तो गोविंद कृपाळ । भक्तकाज करीतसे ।। The real saints don't work out miracles. The miracles happen themselves automatically, because the saints walk on the righteous path of pure devotion. Realisation is sullied and made impure by siddhis or egoistic miracles. But, God in his own merciful ways performs miracles for fulfilling the prayers of devotees, without the knowledge and intervention of saints. Such was the rational interpretation of Maharaj.

Thus, inspite of his ill-health Gurudeo could go to Inchageri in the month of Shravan in the year 1910, along with his mother. There, in the inspiring company of his great spiritual master, all his doubts were gradually resolved, and his mind was slowly brought to a state of equilibrium. He regained his mental peace and balance. Even though the spiritual meditation on Divine Name has to be performed by the individual alone unto himself, the help, the grace, the inspiration and the holy company of the spiritual master and other saints are essential to make the individual efforts effective. This was a proved fact In case of young Gurudeo when he went to Inchageri and stayed in the company of his spiritual master in 1910. He also observed how much devoutly and intensely the close disciples of Maharaj, Shatteppa and Nandeppa, continuously busied themselves, body, mind and soul, in the pious service of their master and derived the spiritual fruits, and thus the faith of Rambhau in his spiritual master consolidated.

During Gurudeo's stay with his mother at Inchageri for a month and a half, in the holy company of his spiritual master, some important spiritual events took place. One such substantial fact was the continuity of the presence of his spiritual Form all the time. Once, he referred to this and said, "Till 1909 - 1910 I was on spiritual probation and thereafter

'I was confirmed in my spiritual service, and hence the continuity of spiritual experiences before my eyes all the time." In the book 'spiritual memoirs' on page 58, there is a reference to this in his own language. Gurudeo states that the temporary probation in spiritual life should be supposed as confirmed only after the continuous presence of the spiritual form of experience all the time, both day and night.

During his six weeks' stay at Inchageri in the holy company of his spiritual master, Gurudeo critically watchad his Guru, repeating the following basic concepts of spiritual life. १) आता असो हे सकळ । जाण पां ज्ञानासि अग्नि मूळ । तया अग्नीचे प्रयाणीं वळ । संपूर्ण आथी ।। ज्ञा.८।२१९. (२) दृढ देहाची आसक्ती । तेथें कैंची पाविजे विरक्ती। विरक्तिवीण भक्ति। केवीं घडे (श्री समर्थ अंतर्भाव प्रकरण ४।१०). (३) भगवद्भावो सर्वांभूती । हेचि ज्ञान हेचि भक्ति । विवेक विरक्ति । याचि नांवे ।। आठव तो परब्रम्ह । नाठव तो भवभ्रम । दोंहोंचें निज वर्म । जाण वापा ।। आठव विसर चित्ती । जेणें जाणिजती । तेचि एकनिश्चिती । निजरूप ।। स्मरण ते निजमुक्ति । विस्मरण तेचि अधोगती ।।

1) Fire of Devotion is the spring of illumination. ज्ञानास मूळ अग्नि.

2) Dispassion is the spring of Devotion. भक्तीस मूळ विरक्ति.

3) Awareness is Brahman, and non-awareness is illusion. आठव तो ब्रम्ह नाठव तो भवभ्रम.

The above three tenets of Shri. Maharaj were found in the following source books,

1) The root of knowledge is fire-Dnyāneswari VIII-219 The Marāthi verse is given above in original.

2) The root of Devotion is dispassion-this is from Shri. Samarth Rāmdās (4-10 अंतर्भाव प्रकरण) The original is given above

3) Remembrance of the Name is Brahman while forgetfulness of the Name is delusion. - The source of this concept is in Ekanath - 182-36 (संत. व. एकनाथ. पा. १८२. ओवी ३६. Original given above.

These profound and aphoristic epigrams expressed by Shri. Bhausaheb maharaj repeatedly, convinced young Gurudeo about the spiritual philosophy of his Gurumaharaj Thus, after six weeks' stay at Inchageri, in the enobling holy company of his spiritual master, the foundation of spiritual life of young Rambhau was consolidated.

When Gurudeo and his mother left Inchageri for Poona, Shri, Maharaj gave the following parting message to him ' नेणपणें जाले तें जालें । जाले ते होऊनि गेलें । जाणतेपणें वर्तलें । पाहिजे नेमस्त ।।

" Things went wrong when light didn't dawn,
Well ! Done is done, don't worry,
Now at least with wisdom blessed
Improve yourself ! Don't tarry,
You will see good days ! Hear fragrant news
The grace of the Lord will grant you bliss.

what happened in ignorance has happened, and merged with past, but, when one has developed the capacity to know and understand, one should act and behave with disciplined regularity.

Shri, Gurudeo has depicted his impressions of his stay at Inchageri in his preface to Nitya Nemavali - Daily book of Bhajans which he selected and completed under the direct supervision of Shri Maharaj. " The value of a great master cannot be grasped unless one stays in his pious company for a long time and keenly and devoutly watches and observes his greatness in every action for a number of days. The present writer has minutely observed every action of his, during his recent long stay in his close company." Amidst the concourse of the devotees engrossed in singing the Name of God, bodily strain is truly forgotten in the ecstasy of love, and tranquility of mind is attained After his return from Inchageri, he wrote the following letter to Shri. Maharaj on 20th September 1910.

" It is essential to do some work for the maintenance of the family. But, I desire from the bottom of my heart that the said work or engagement should be convenient and congenial for devotion to God. It rests with you to fulfil this desire. I strongly wish that I may not be compelled to work or serve in a condition where my ego would be pampered or my heart would neglect the devotion to God, and thus my spiritual thought and spiritual action would be hampered. Then, it matters very little how much remuneration I get therefrom. I wish heartily, that I should be employed in such a post, that I shall have ample opportunities to diffuse devotion to God and sing the glory of saints and sages. It is hundred times superior to glorify and worship Divinity through the growth of spiritual experience and exhuberance of devotion to God, than the pomp and splendour of God manifested through the lavish medium of wealth and money. But, to grant this type of wisdom, strength and convenience and determination, rests with you. I sincerely wish and pray that I may not be forced by circumstances to give up the path of morality for the sake of service for earning only money. In other branches of occupation where one is required to sacrifice one's basic principle of chastity in respect of women and of aversion for another's wealth, and where one is likely to be an easy prey of pride and ego and disbelief in the very existence of God, I do not at all wish to accept any job of this nature."

In his letter dated 20th January 1911 he has repeated the same request - "I honestly do not want a job on account of which my heart would lose its grip of spiritual meditation and concentrate itself on the employment." Again in his letter dated 19th February 1911 he writes, "If the job of a Sanskrit Professor at Kolhapur College is encouraging and helpful for devotion to spiritual life, it may be made available." Again in his letter dated 11th April 1911 he writes" Owing to the pursuit and search for three or four months for a job, I am missing the grip of the feeling of bliss in meditation." In his letter of September 1911, he writes, "In the present occupation I feel that the whole of my day is spent uselessly. Owing to the derth of good reading and sanctifying hearing and study, I am not experiencing the usual energy and joy, and hence I feel like searching another job." In November 1911 he again wrote to his master; "My repeated attempts for different jobs has made me restless." Then young Rambhau was working as a lecturer in English Composition on Rs. 40/- P. M. and he was offered the post of a headmaster of Gadag High School on Rs. 100/- P. M. He was in a fix as to whether he should accept this job at Gadag on a higher salary. as he was doubtful whether it would be congenial for his spiritual life. So, he again wrote from Poona to Shri. Maharaj on 17th March 1912:

"During the last eight or ten days my mind is restless owing to anxiety as to what should be done. I am working here but am unable to attend to spiritual meditation and so I am not having peace of mind. It is not necessary that I should couch in words, the thoughts in my mind. You know everything. But... ...... During the last two or three years I have mentally determined to utilise my intellect and body for propagating throughout the world the spiritual greatness of yourself and the greatness and importance of Self-Realisation and sumum bonum of spiritual life. I am not desirous of leaving the present job for more money but because the circumstances here are not congenial for my spiritual meditation. I am not able to solve the riddle of making both family and worldly life and also spiritual life equally prosperous and happy without hindrance to my contemplation on God ...... Therefore, I seek guidance and decision from you as to which job would make it possible for me to devote myself body and mind to the spiritual cause of self and others. If I can do that better at Poona on Rs. 40/- only I am willing to stay here and I do not at all wish to go to Gadag for Rs. 100/- P M. But if by staying at Poona my spiritual progress will be hampered I do not want this job. So, kindly show me the way out of this darkness,"

To all these numerous letters his spiritual master replied in one sentence; "नेम दृष्टीनें निरंतर असावें, म्हणजे उद्योगाचें कार्य आपोआप घडून येत आहे." ("Fix up your heart in regular spiritual contemplation on Divine Name with your gaze concentrated, and the employment problem will automatically be solved in its own way.") And the young Gurudeo has been asked to act up according to the principles and tenets of 1) 'Dhir' (धीर) - resolute and enduring attitude in life, 2) 'Udār' (उदार)-noble and bountiful magnanimity of heart, 3) 'Gambhir' (गंभीर) - grave and considerate outlook in facing the circumstances and situations in life.

The young Rambhau having grasped the kernel of the suggestions of Maharaj decided to stay on at Poona and dropped his idea of going over to Gadag. Thereafter within a few days he got a job of Rs. 125/- per month at Poona only as curator of the old manuscripts library at Deccan College. But, because it was a job without vacation facility, he again felt worried owing to his incapacity to go over to Inchageri in vacations. So, he again wrote to Maharaj on 11-5-1912: "You had prophetically told that I am having better days ahead and that I shall have a chance to hear happy and fragrant news and there will be joy in life to come. …… Now I pray my master that the devotion to God should prosper and the public proclamation of the glory and devotion to God should ring throughout the world. Otherwise, owing to higher salary and more wealth in my possession I may get infatuated with pride and without the progress on the path of devotion, I might degrade myself in spiritual life. So, according to the words of advice in the sayings of Shri. Nimbargi Maharaj (Maharajravara Vachana) I completely dedicate myself to you and pray for granting me good and sage counsel. How to spend the wealth, and without getting myself inflated with pride in wealthy circumstances? How can I humbly dedicate myself at the holy feet of God, may kindly be shown to me repeatedly through your inspiring words of guidance and advice."

Thereafter young Rambhau wrote to Maharaj that the employment which does not make it possible for him to go to the home of his spiritual master at Inchageri is a second -rate post. To this Shri, Maharaj replied rather sternly, that " This job is a gift from God, and hence, ' disrespecting words should not be uttered about this job.' As a reply to this admonishing letter from his Guru, young Rambhau again wrote to him on 18th Desember 1912 " Even if Guru maharaj writes in stern and bitter words, I receive them in all sweetness, as they are ultimately for my good ... ... In the world, it is a fashion to speak sweet words on the face, but very few are the persons who speak harsh and bitter words. Just as the bitter doze of medicine results in the improvement and cure of the disease, so also are the words of advice of our Gurumaharaj. Because of continuous service year after year, there is hindrance to spiritual Sadhana, I wrote that I want to get it changed, and hope that Gurumaharaj would pardon me for the same. My master knows the motive behind this attempt. I desire to have service which will help in encouraging me to engage myself heart and soul in devotion to God, and which will not create hindrance in my spiritual contemplation on Divine Name."

Again in 1913 young Rambhau wrote to Maharaj regarding changing his service from Deccan College on Rs 125/- p. m as it was not so much convenient for spiritual Sadhana as compared to a service in Fergusson College on Rs.100/-p. m. which was more convenient for spiritual life " Just as one is confused when faced with two cross roads, so also which of the two services is better for spiritual development is a problem for me. Hence, I pray for your kind guidance."

Because he could not find vacation to go over to Inchageri in his Curator's post, he desired to go back to Fergusson College even on a lesser salary of Rs. 100/ -p. m. as against Rs. 125/ – p, m. at Deccan College. The job at Fergusson College was a vacation Job. So he prayed to his Spiritual master, 'Let me get any service, but let my heart be attracted towards Divinity with increasing devotion and love.'

Owing to the invaluable guidance and grace of his spiritual Master young Gurudeo imbibed the skill of reconciling the secular life with the spiritual pursuit. Whenever Shri. Maharaj used to visit place like Jamkhandi, Terdal, Rabkavi, Tikota, Bijapur and Sholapur etc, Gurudeo tried to meet him and stay in his spiritual company, These peregrinations of maharaj were indeed rare occasions for young Gurudeo to win the favour of his Gurumaharaj. Gurudeo had realised that his master never forsakes him. Whenever Gurudeo wrote to him. 'Apali Kripa-Drishti Asavi' (आपली कृपादृष्टी असावी) 'Let your merciful eye of Grace be ever on me', Maharaj used to reply 'कृपा करून दृष्टी ठेवा, म्हणजे कृपादृष्टी आहेच.' 'If you kindly fix up your eye of concentration on Nāma and 'Vastu', the merciful eye of Grace is always with you.' Young Gurudeo used to meditate nearly eight to nine hours every day in that period, when his health was not normal. He was gradually rising up in the spiritual spiral leading to Divinity. Because of his intense longing for Self-Realisation young Rambhau was blessed with varieties of colour and light experiences of Divinity. Shri. Gurudeo once wrote, "It is a preliminary stage of infinite light and colours. It has coercive power in it." Philosophy is like a fence that would keep away the stray cattle of superstitions from entering into the fields of spiritual experience. I began a serious study of European philosophy with the intent of finding in Eastern and Western philosophical thought, a justification for the spiritual life.

In 1911 when Rambhau Ranade was a lecturer in English Composition at Fergusson College, Poona, he taught Carlyle. In his book Carlyle- a Critical Review – Ranade quotes Mazzini's comments on Carlyle. "There is upon Earth something greater, more divine than the individual, namely Humanity, the Collective being always advancing towards God, of which, as Emerson says, 'Each individual is one more incarnation ……. History is not the Biography of great men; the great men of Earth are but marking stones on the road of Humanity. They are the priests of its religion. What priest is equal in the balance to the whole religion of which he is a minister?"

This chapter from Quest to Conquest is indicative of both the worldly and the spiritual efforts which Gurudeo put in for making his life a spiritual success We need civic virtues for social and political stability. Civic virtues are embedded on moral principles and the moral or ethical precepts get their strength from religious beliefs and doctrines. The ideal of Jeevan-Mukti is thus achieved through the beatific vision of God combined with the service of humanity.

* * *

Chapter Four

From (Philosophical) Research To Spiritual Realisation.

In the field of contemoorary Indian Philosophy Gurudeo Dr. Ranade has captured a unique position because of his critical and constructive study, and research in both Indian and Western Philosophy. We can easily find a happy and a brilliant blending of Eastern and Western thoughts in the comparative exposition of Gurudeo. His Philosophy of mysticism or Atma - Sakshatkar i. e. Self-Realisation is evolved on the basis of his own spiritual experiences and a comparative study and research about the universal nature of the same. Since his study of the philosophy of Spirit in Maharashtra Saints in the year 1908, Gurudeo had all along busied himself in the critical study of Eastern and Western Thought, for finding a rational justification for his spiritual experiences and his faith in his Spiritual Master.

In his book on the Spiritual Life of Mahatma Gandhi, Gurudeo has given a clear idea about the beginning of his philosophical research; " When I was appointed Curator of the Government Manuscript Library at the Deccan College for the period 1914 when the permanent incumbent of the post had gone to Harward, a vision opened before me. There were 18. 000 manuscripts, Sanskrit, Prakrit, Pali and the rest, Kashmiri Recensions, particularly of the Rigveda, which was written on ' Bhurjapatra ' in 5th or 6th Century A. D., immense mansucripts in Sankhya and Yoga, innumerable dissertations on ' Nyaya and Vaisheshika ' and so forth, which opened my vision and I saw a vast literature and what I had gathered somewhat from Colebrook or a little from Maxmuller. I wanted to supplement and support from my study of all these things: and my study of European Philosophy came to my aid in those early days- 1914-16, and some three or four volumes have already been published in that series.

" Mysticism is derived from the Greek word ' Mustein ' which means to shut one's lips. So, mysticism is a philosophy or realisation and enjoyment of God in silence. Whereever this is to be found, whether in Christianity or Islam or any literatures of India, it might be called a philosophy of mysticism or of *Mauna* ". " It is not merely an imaginative thought about nature or about its forces or an emotional upsurge concerned more with feelings than with reality that constitutes mysticism. "

"A God-realiser is one who sits silent, does not speak .. and enjoys the creation and workings of God within himself. To describe God or Reality by word or mouth is impossible. Our real experience of it is in the hearts. So this is the attitude of mysticism. " (P. 136-38),

In the last three chapters, we have tried to visualise the historical, the psychological, the devotional and the spiritual aspects of development of young Gurudeo. This biography of Gurudeo Ranade is mainly his intellectual and spiritual biography. For the benefit of earnest students of philosophy and religion I intend to write about Gurudeo's critical study and his deductions regarding the reconciliations of various conflicting views and thoughts.

Gurudeo's life and his teachings have served as a beacon-light to many aspirants like my humble self in their voyage through the deep and the ruffled sea of life. As we have seen in the last chapter, his physical break-down due to cerebra pthysis, gave a new turn to his life, because of his intensive Sadhana with unfaltering devotion to and under the saving grace and guidance of his spiritual master. Shri. Gurudeo had his own convincing spiritual experiences of 'Unlit light and unstruck music of the Infinite.' His critical rationalism prompted him to justify them in terms of philosophic thought. Therefore, he devoted special attention to the study of Indian and Western philosophy.

His keen interest was centered round Greek Philosophy. So also he was highly influenced by the Advaita Philosophy of Shankaracharya, During his visit to Benaras in 1908, the problem of reconciliation of Bhakti as expressed in the devotional prayers of Shankaracharya-with the Adwaita Philosophy of Shankara, a crucial point of his research in Philosophy was before him. On page 178 of Mysticism in Maharashtra Gurudeo writes, "It is exactly this reconciliation which is made in mysticism generally and more particularly in the Maharashtra School which is worth while noting. Shri. Gurudeo's attempt to reconcile Advaita with Bhakti was supported by the following important passages from Saint Dnyaneshwar, Eknath and Ramdas 1) In Dnyaneswari ऐसे मीचि होऊनि

पांडवा। करिती माझी सेवा (ज्ञा. 9-196). After realising identity with Me, the devotees serve Me. This is an expression of 'ज्ञानोत्तर भक्ति,' Devotion after Realisation. 2) In Eknathi Bhagawat, the saint writes- 'अभेद भजनाचा हरिख। दिव भक्त झाले एक' (ए. भागवत 27-209). The bliss of devotion in identity makes the devotee and God one. This is indicative of 'Abheda Bhakti'. 3) In Dasbodha, Samarth Ramdas writes-

आत्मनिवेदनाचे अंती । जे का घडली अभेद भक्ति ।
तये नांव सायोज्य मुक्ति । सत्य जाणावी (VIII-8-19)

This is Ātmanivedan Bhakti suggested by Ramdas. Ātmanivedan consists in finding out who the devotee is and then what is meant by God. Ātmanivedan is attained when we have properly investigated the nature of Self and God. When the devotee realises God he becomes one with Him, and the distinction between God and devotee vanishes. He is called Bhakta because he is not Vibhakta.

The verse of Shankaracharya- ' भावाद्वैतं सदा:कुर्यात् । क्रियाद्वैतं न कर्हिचित् । अद्वैतं सर्वभूतेषु । नाद्वैतं गुरुणासह ' The principle of Advaita should be applicable on emotional plane only and not on the platform of worldly duties. The feeling of identity and oneness with humanity is only consistent on idealistic spiritual platform. But we should not apply this attitude of identity with our Guru or spiritual master.

Even a distinguished Christian theologian like Rudolf otto has also referred to Adwaita Bhakti appreciatively in his book on the Bhagwadgita. Gurudeo Ranade had a definite point of view, essentially spiritual, even in his early essays on various topics They indicate his deep scholarship and vast reading. His lucid method of exposition makes it all the more attractive and interesting. His comparative studies and his critical deductions are quite convincing and sound.

Research on Greek philosophers,

His critical study of Greek philosophy and his research work in this field, were based on his knowledge of the original Greek sources. Shri. Aurobindo was so much impressed by Gurudeo's pamphlets on Greek philosophers that he suggested that 'a complete history of Greek philosophy by this perfect writer and scholar would be a priceless gain.'

Gurudeo refers Herakleitos to the tradition of scientists and not to the tradition of mystics. His ideas of perpetual change, reign of law and conservation of energy have a great significance from scientific point of view. Herakleitos inveighs the practice of drinking wine, because it makes the soul moist. He attacks 'image worship' and says that 'He who prays to an image is chattering a stone wall'. He vehemently attacks the practice of animal sacrifice, performed with the object of 'purifying oneself through blood'. Agreeing with Herakleitos, Gurudeo Ranade observes that Relativism is restricted to the phenomenal sphere; it has no application to God. The reference in Herakleitos to "The Kingdom belongs to the child" touches the heart of spiritual life. It presupposes one of the important teachings of Christianity. It also resembles the idea of ' बालोन्मत्तपिशाचवत् ' of a mystic in Indian philosophy.

The article of Gurudeo on 'Aristotle's Criticism of the Eleatics' is a master-piece in the literature of Critical philosophy. In this essary Gurudeo has exposed the defects in Aristotle's criticism. One gets an insight into the philosophy of Eleatics.

Gurudeo's essay on Xenophanes gives a correct appreciation of his theory of one God - Supreme among Gods and Men alike. He has been correctly depicted, as a great human philosopher and not an abstract metaphysician. His stress on the value of humanistic studies and on the importance of moral education have been convincingly depicted by Gurudeo. He has a word of praise for Xenophanes.

Gurudeo has a great regard for Parmenides for his monistic Idealism. In his essay, Gurudeo has shown a typical resemblance between the views of Parmenides and Shankaracharya. The identification of Thought and Being in Parmenides is like the identification of 'Sat and Chit' in Shankaracharya. There is similarity in the process of distinction between Opinion and Truth with the distinction which Shankaracharya propounds between 'Vyāvahārik Satya' and 'Pāramārthick Satya'

Gurudeo's essay on Zeno, depicts him as a great intellectual gymnast. His arguments have been described as immeasurably subtle and profound. He used all his dialectic skill in silencing the partisans of plurality and motion, and in defending the Idealistic Monism of his master, Parmenides.

The philosophy of Melissos, as given by Gurudeo in his essay, is like that of Spinoza. It is a culmination of the deductive method applied to metaphysics. Melissos arrives at the conclusion that Being is one, homogenious, incorporeal and immovable. Unlike Parmenides, he regards 'Being' as Infinite.

Gurudeo's essay on Thales is most interesting and instructive as it raises the fundamental problem about the original ' stuff ' of the Universe. Thales said that it is water from which all things are born and into which they are finally resolved. Thales believed that all things are filled with 'Gods' and 'good Souls'. This according to Gurudeo is Pan-psychism. Plato included Thales among the 'Seven Sages' of Greece. Aristotle regards him as the inaugurator of philosophy of Nature.

The essay on Protagoras by Gurudeo is very interesting. His doctrine 'Man is the measure of all things' has been compared with Gomperz, and Schillar. Gurudeo Ranade agrees with Aristotle in his view that 'far from there being any question of Degrees of Truth and Error, there are only Degrees of Error. Truth is one but error infinite. "Truth is one, absolute and immutable and that is in God."

Essence of Gurudeo's Philosophy.

Theo-Centric or God-Centred theory is quite distinct from the Cosmocentric and the homo-centric theories. This forms the crux of Gurudeo's philosophy. It states that every thing lives and moves and has its being in God. The realisation of such Divinity is the summum-bonum of human life. This basic reality of Divine presence and spiritual Realisation was a matter of personal attachment and devotion even in his early stage of life. He began his spiritual career only when he was fifteen.

As early as 1915, the young Gurudeo was invited by the Sanskrit Academy in Bangalore to deliver a series of Lectures on Upanishads. This was a God-sent occasion for him to study the Upanishads most critically and thoroughly, This detailed and critical study of the Upanishads texts in the background of his deep and scholarly pursuit of Indian and Western Philosophy helped him a great deal to grasp the basic principles of Self-Realisation, its Philosophical justification and methods for its attainment and the effects following therefrom.

His lectures at Bangalore under the presidentship of the then Maharaja of Baroda, Sir, Sayajirao Gaikwad, were highly appreciated by him and liked by the intelligent audiance. Later on they were developed into his monumental work ' A Constructive Survey of Upanishàdic Philosophy '. This was his first publication which brought him great reputation as a renowned scholar and philosopher of International repute all over India and also abroad. One of the eminent Sanskrit Scholars and thinkers of the time, Dr. Ganganath Zha who was then the Vice-Chancellor of Allahabad University therefore invited Gurudeo Ranade most cordially to Allahabad University as a professor of Philosophy.

During the period of two years 1911-12, he was a teacher of English at Fergusson College, Poona. He recommended Bain's Rhetoric (2 vols) for close study. One of the illustrations of a balanced sentence he gave to the students from Bain's Rhetoric was 'Books help when friends do not and when books do not, meditation '. Thereafter in the year 1913 he got the leave vacancy post of the Curator of the Library at Deccan College. It is in this period that his research faculties got a philip and ample scope for its growth and development. Then, in the year 1914 he was offered the life-membership of Deccan Education Society even when he was only a graduate

During all these years, constant meditation on the Name of the Lord and meditative reading of books on philosophy were his principal occupations.

Deccan Education Society was mainly an educational institution with a noble tradition of self-sacrifice. It offered Gurudeo an opportunity of infusing ideals of noble life amongst the students. His main complaint regarding his previous job was his inability to go over to his Guru's place at least once or twice a year. So, Gurudeo was eager to have a post with vacation facilities. Hence, even though the post in the Fergusson College offered him less salary, he accepted it mainly for its vacation conveniences and its more congenial nature for spiritual aadhana and company of his spiritual master.

At the beginning of his professorial career Rambhau Ranade was teaching 'Hero and Hero-worship' of the renowned writer Carlyle, to his students in B A. Class. The independent, profound and precious thoughts of Carlyle were very much liked and admired by him in those days. He used to forget himself while teaching Carlyle's book.

About his study of Indian and European philosophy, Gurudeo has written as follows: "I began my study of Vedanta in the year 1908, tried to have a knowledge of different systems of Indian Philosophy, was much perplexed and could not understand, the texts were very bad... .. so my study of European philosophy came to me as a rebound from my study of Indian philosophy...... I began my study of European philosophy in the year 1910 and when I had gone a long way with it, say till 1913 then I turned back and found that there were great treasures of thought in Indian Philosophy." It is only when we take a comparative view of things that we understand any of them better. This happened in the case of Indian Philosophy.

In this way Gurudeo studied philosophy in all its branches and appeared for his M.A. in 1914 with Philosophy as his principal subject. He got the first rank in First class and won the rare honour of Chancellor's Gold medal. Even the examiners remarked on his answer papers that " The examinee knows more than the examiners". Along with the Chancellor's Gold medal, he also won the Telang Gold med al. One day when he was absorbed in meditation prior to his examination he had a vision of the following telegram ' First Class First - Chancellors' medal'.

Though Gurudeo took serious interest in Philosophy rather late, he could achieve remarkable proficiency in various branches of philosophy within comparatively a short span of time. Owing to his high intellectual calibre and his innate aptitude for the subject he won the rare laurels in the subject because of his great assiduity and devotion.

Gurudeo's study of philosophy offered him a sound support for his religious and spiritual beliefs. Gurudeo's scholastic research for a rational interpretation of mysticism was crowned with unique success in his later life. His Pathway to God in Marathi, Hindi and Kannada literatures are eloquent on this issue.

Philosophy was not merely a process of thinking but it was actually a way of living for Gurudeo Ranade. The scope of Philosophy is very wide as it has to study life as an organic whole. The philosoohical approach is synthetical and valuational and not merely analytical or descriptive. Gurudeo's philosophy is basically a philosophy of spirit ! It moves round God as its centre. The study and the knowledge of philosophy is highly useful for spiritual life as it strengthens the impulse or moral obligation and stresses the importance of inculcating virtues like compassion, charity, chastity and self-control etc. and disowning and diminishing the influence of vices like greed, lust, anger, jealousy and hatred and animosity etc.

For leading a regulated and disciplined life of moral stature, it is essential to imbibe the mental discipline of detachment. This feeling of detachment should not be the hectic reaction of desperate renunciation, but it should grow out of a well-balanced discrimination. This negative virtue of detachment would be barren, if it is not supported by a positive virtue at its back. The detachment for worldly objects should be based on an attachment for higher values of life or attachment for devotion to God. The three facets of moral virtues as expressed in Faith, Wisdom and Chastity are not water-tight compartments. They are co-related with each other. They together add to the glory of spiritual life and the ideal of Self-Realisation. We can hope to enter the Shrine of Divinity with the help of these virtues supported mainly with the motive-power of the contemplation on Divine Name. Gurudeo urges the necessity of meditation on the Name of God duly imparted by a God-realised teacher.

Gurudeo Ranade was not a whit less in his spiritual and philosophical greatness as compared to the old Rishis like Yădnyavalkya and Vashistha and saints like Dnyāneswara and Rāmdās. In addition to this Gurudeo had to his credit the great work of reconciling the different views regarding the existence of God, the super-sensuous nature of Divine experience and the various methods of God-realisation.

During the last fifty years or so, two different trends of philosophical science are emerging on account of the progressive knowledge in Western philosophy. They are (1) philosophy of Mysticism or God-Realisation and (2) Psychological analysis of Mysticism..

In the first trend of thought i. e. philosophy of Mysticism we have to study (a) The nature of God as Saguna -God with Form, and as Nirguna- God without Form, (b) Basis for His existence, (c) Relation of God and His Devotees as also, relation of Spiritual Master and his disciples, (d) The relation of Morality and Mysticism and (e) Varieties of spiritual emancipation and their nature.

In the second trend of thought of 'Psychology of Mysticism' we have to study (a) The role of a devotee or an aspirant, (b) An elaborate study of various methods of meditation or spiritual Sadhana, (c) Weeding out of vices and inculcating and fostering of Virtues, (d) Description of the varieties of Spiritual experience and their gradation, (e) Effects of God-realisation on physical, mental and other planes, (f) The Dark night in the life of a devotee and the dawn of spiritual experience.

The Divine-Self or the Providence is the basic promoter of the entire Universe. He is both emanent and transcendent both in the outside Nature and the inside stature of every living being. He is the end of all known values. It is entirely on account of the close association of, and intimate contemplation on, the Divine element, present both in the individual and the universe, 'Pinda' and 'Brahmanda', that we are able to achieve and inculcate in ourselves the noble qualities of selfless service. Thus, in the ultimate analysis of things and events in life, the reign of goodwill, peace, spiritual brotherhood and above all a dedicated way of devotional life to God are possible only on the background of the philosophy and teachings of Gurudeo Ranade.

In this fourth Chapter 'From Research to Realisation' we will be circumambulating round the Central Crux of his intellectual eminence and his Himalayan Excellence in Life Divine.

Spiritual Pursuit or Sadhana

Gurudeo Ranade attached very great importance to meditation on the Divine Name, initiated by a spiritual master, who has attained to the acme of Self-Realisation. To avoid the possible retrograde motion of a devotee, Gurudeo always stressed the necessity of doggedly pursuing the meditation on the Divine Name without a break or a gap and that too in perfect solitude and peace of mind. He, from his personal experience, exhorted his devotees to take every opportunity of availing the company of pious and sincere devotees and saintly persons. His spiritual master had once urged Gurudeo, that mere individualistic meditation on God would not be as effective as in the holy company of his spiritual master and his honest devotees.

Hence, Gurudeo hankered so much for a vacation job so that he could meet his spiritual master once or twice in a year and stay and meditate in the Collective Company of brother-disciples of his Guru.

For hastening the spiritual progress, the devotee has to stick to his spiritual meditation with saturated concentration of mind, deeply rooted progressive devotion and acute and vigilant alertness and an unabated persistence on the Path-Way to God.

Owing to the psychological effects of spiritual discourses of saints like Shri. Bhausaheb Maharaj, Shri. Amburao Baba and Shri. Gurudeo and on account of the contemplation on the Divine qualities of the spiritual Self, the minds and hearts of the devotees are cleansed as expressed by saint Dnyaneswara, "Guru Vākye Man Dhutale" (गुरुवाक्ये मन धुतले). The heart is purified from within on account of the discourses of the spiritual master. As a result, the supersensuous, permanent and unadulterated happiness or bliss dawns in the heart of honest devotees. This undiminishing and undecaying joy, pleasure and peace emanating from the spiritual visions, sounds, colours, tastes and brilliant forms of the Self are a matter of universal verification and experience by saints, sages, yogis and mystics of all times, ages and countries, and irrespective of castes, creeds and nationalities. Gurudeo's inspiring preface to the Mysticism in Maharashtra and his various 'Path Way to God' Volumes in Hindi, Marathi and Kannada are like holy temples in which the resounding bells and conches of inspiring thoughts and enobling ideas are ever ringing with his eternal vibrations. Now, it is upto us to dip ourselves in the holy current of his sublime life of the Spirit. This humble book of biography of Gurudeo is one of the Ghats or a well-built platform for taking a bath in the holy Ganges of his intellectual and spiritual biography.

To get rid of the illusion of attachment for transient and fleeting things of pleasure and joy in the world and to develop an innate taste and love for unlimited and eternal peace, bliss and contentment emanating from Almighty God, we have to purify ourselves in body, mind and heart. This process of Self-purification starts with the advent of a Spiritual Preceptor. and the dawn of Divine Name in our lives enveloped with pitchy darkness in various births. The basic perception even of a small speck of light from a tiny candle, alone can make us realise the magnitude of darkness, ignorance and so called mountain of sins residing in our lives full of ignorance and sloth. The typical song of the great saint Vijayadasa, in Source book of Path-Way to God in Kannada Literature (Page 152) and Gurudeo's upsurging and sublimating exposition in English thereupon would make the readers realise the vital process of Self purification.

"It is one of the best songs in Kannada literature in which Vijayadasa has beautifully expressed his spiritual experience. It gaves us the whole history of a spiritual aspirant, from the time when he began his spiritual life in delusion and darkness, as Vijayadasa himself confesses, until the door gradually opened. Vijayadasa exclaims with joy, "today (the day on which he composed the poem), the door of the palace of spiritual experience his opened out to me." Before this 'there was a blinding darkness. spreading everywhere, which made it impossible for me to see सूसिदं तमसिनिं काणुतिद्दिल्ल । The three things that helped him, he tells us, to open the door were, the grace of God, the power of the Guru, and the company of the Saints. It is on account of the cumulative effect of these three forces that he was able to enter the palace of spiritual experience. The key was supplied to him by Divine Grace; his Guru gave him the power to open the door, and then the door opened ! But when the door opened, what happened ? The guards of delusion and darkness, who were watching at the gate, 'ran helterskelter' (गत्तलो ओडिदरु). They ran away because the grace of the Guru had descended on Vijayadasa. He held the torch of divine meditation in his hand, and began to see what had happened. There were nine doors to that palace and Vijayadasa tells us that five doors were inside and four outside. This is a description with which psychologists, physiologists and philosophers might not entirely agree. But that is not the point which I want to stress here. There are nine doors of course. But, Vijayadasa says there are five inside and four outside. When the doors were opened and he went inside, the guards of God made their appearance, and he found God, Vijaya vithala sitting in great splendour. He had a smiling face, and the illumination of a thousand suns (मिरगुवा कोटि रवियंते) and was being attended upon by a number of His companions. That is a very important point. स्वुर्ति गणमध्य सच्चिदानंदैक्य रमेयोडने नगेमोगदि मिनुगुत्तिरुवा । The one Satchidananda, the lord of Ramā, was shining resplendently with a sweet smile on his lips, in the midst of his attendants, bearing his own form. In these two lines, Vijayadasa brings together all the three different points of view, namely रमेयोडेय the lord of Ramã, the personalistic stand point, स्वमूर्तिगणमध्य the pluralistic stand point, and सच्चिदानंदेक्य the Monistic stand-point. A great saint like him however, does not care for and is not dogmatic about all these seemingly different aspects of Reality.

The lord of Ramă was being attended upon by a number of associates. You might have read in the Bhagawata that Gods' doorkeepers jaya and Vijaya, who were endowed by God with his own form, had displeased the sage Sanatkumara and others by not allowing them to go inside to visit Vishnu. Sanatkumara cursed them and they both had to go through three successive lives, Hiranyaksa, Hiranyakasapu, Ravana and Kumbhakarna, shisupala and Vakradanta, respectively. before they could enter celestial domain again. But the point here is that it is not merely these two, Jaya and vijay who had the complexion and the likeness of God, but all those who live in the Vaikuntha region have that likeness of God; as the Bhăgawata says वसंति यत्र पुत्रषा: सर्वे वैकुंठमूर्तय:. Therefore Vijayadasa talks of स्वमूर्ति गणमध्य सच्चिदानंदैवय.

Those who have studied Indian philosophy and particularly the question of liberation know that there are four kinds of liberations: 'Samipatã, Salokatã, Sarupatã and Sayujyată- (Nearness, living in the same world; Having the same form and Being one with God). Here arises the question of 'Sarupata' and Sayujyatã. All these associates had a form like Vishnu himself. The reason was that when a man from outside went in, he should not know who was Vishnu. Of course, Badarayana towards the end of his Sutras makes a difference between those who attain to form of God and to God himself. These maintain an exact likeness of God, no doubt, but the power of creation is reserved for God alone, says Badarayana towards the end of Chapter IV of the *Sutras*. What we are, however, concerned with here is that all these attendents of God had the form of God. So from the state of darkness and delusion, Vijayadasa is carried on to a stage in which he could see with the torch of divine meditation, the splendour of God Vijaya Vithala, and ultimately he is taken to the palace where God is attended upon by a number of divine associates, everyone of whom looked like vishnu himself. This is one of the most splendid poems which gives us in brief the whole history of spiritual life" (P. G K. pp. 152-54) The above exposition of Gurudeo on the poem of Shri. Vijayadasa is a complete unit of spiritual ascent from beginning to the end. In the entire volumes of his Pathway to God, Gurudeo has allotted the maximum number of pages for this Kannada Song ef Vijayadas.

Last Visit and stay with the Spiritual Master at Inchageri.

In the year 1913, Poona city was a hot-bed of plague epidemic. So, Prof. Ranade shifted from his own place to the house of his cousin-brother Shri. Nageshrao. There also, there was the recurrence of the death of rats due to plague. So, Sri. Rambhau went to Inchageri with his mother in the month of Margasheersh in 1913 and attended the monthly Spiritual Gathering of intense collective meditation amongst the conference of devotees there.

When they reached Inchageri the mother of Gurudeo

Smt. Parvatibai, prostrated before the Saint of Umadi with tears in her eyes, She was extremely anxious in her heart owing to the precarious health of her elder daughter Sm . Bhagu-akka. Shri. Bhausaheb Maharaj who cherished great affection for Shri. Rambhau was overwhelmed with compassion for the continuous worries and agonies of Gurudeo's mother. He looked at the sky for some time, with a concentrated attention on his spiritual form, as if to solicit the spiritual consent of God to helf Gurudeo's mother to relieve her of her agonies and worries. While looking at the Spiritual form of the Self, Shri. Maharaj nodded his head. Gurudeo told that he was keenly watching all the movements of the Saint of Umadi. Gurudeo had a strong faith and deep conviction that the Saint of Umadi had identified himself with the Almighty God during his life time.

Then, Sri. Maharaj affirmatively nodded his head and took out four pills from his bag and gave them to Smt. Parvatibai. He asked her to give these tablets to her daughter and by the time the four tablets are consumed, Smt. Bhagu akka will ba cured from her disease. The later developments proved that every word which the Saint of Umadi told then, came out to be true. Thus, the mother and Shri. Gurudeo were internally convinced about the spiritual greatness of Sri. Maharaj and a feeling of genuine devotion and profound faith developed in their hearts.

one day during their stay at Inchageri in the spiritual vicinity of Shri. Maharaj, Shri, Maharaj casually remarked in the presence of Rambhau and Nandeppa 'देवरु कोट्ट मरतान'; God has given you enough, but you have forgotten Him. This utterance of Sri. Maharaj was not quite clear to Gurudeo and hence he sought its clarification from Sri. Nandeppa. Sri. Nandeppa explained the meaning of the casual utterance and remark of Sri. Maharaj and said that Gurudeo should arrange for a spiritual offering of a sweet dish like 'Bundiche Ladu' (बुंदीचे लाडू), a small token of his great regard for the spiritual founder of the school-Sri. Nimbargi Maharaj.

Just before Shri. Rambhau was to leave for Inchageri from Poona in the month of Margashirsha 1913, he had met with an accident to his leg in the college. Dr. Dandavate was treating the wound. But, the doctor was of the opinion that the leg could not be cured completely unless a surgical operation was done. Shri, Rambhau however without caring for the doctor's suggestion went over to Inchageri with a limping leg. When Shri. Maharaj observed Rambhau limping in his leg, he told him a remedy. The remedy was to apply and massage the saliva from his mouth to the limping leg, only after his long hours of meditation on the Name of God, given to him by his spiritual preceptor. After fifteen days of such a spiritual treatment suggested by his Guru, the leg of Gurudeo was cured completely and he could walk quite normally. Gurudeo gratefully used to refer to the assurance of Shri. Maharaj in the words of Sri. Samarth Rāmdās –नामे विषबाधा हरती – the spiritual Name has the potency to remove the ill effects of poison. The septic poisonous wound in the leg healed completely within fifteen days.

During this long stay at Inchageri Sri. Rambhau could easily observe that there was a fast deterioration in the health of his spiritual master. The other devotees of Maharaj like Smt. Shivalingavva-akka had a feeling that the saint of Umadi being a great realised Soul, must be possessing the extraordinary power of postponing his hour of death.

Once in his intimate talk with the saint of Umadi, Shri. Rambhau told Maharaj that he and his uncle intend to build a house at Inchageri for their residence. To this Sri. Maharaj replied "When you go over to Inchageri next time you are quite welcome to stay in my house. You need not build a new house," When Shri. Rambhau was to leave for Poona after the completion of the Spiritual Saptah-week. Shri. Maharaj spoke to him with an emotional voice and with a heart upsurging with the love of a spiritual mother and a heavenly father: "If you spend your life for eleven months in your worldly preoccupations and only one month at Inchageri in the intense spiritual meditation and Bhajan, God will relieve you of all the anxieties and worries in your life."

When other devotees were leaving for their homes after one month's spiritual sojourn at Inchageri in the holy company of their spiritual master, the saint of Umadi, with the magnanimous and loving heart of a Divine mother used to go upstairs and stand on the parapet of his house watching the departure of his devotees with tears in his eyes. How much profound, sublime and supremely selfless love the spiritual master cherished for his devotees! He was a Divine Mother on Earth incarnated in a human body. A mere retrospective devout peep and glimpse into the unseen and distant past even before my birth makes my heart palpitate with spiritual emotions and gratitude. And similar occasions of overflowing and unfathomable affection and care of

Gurudeo which I had the previlege to enjoy makes me realise the genuineness and sanctity of the way in which the great spiritual masters of Gurudeo showered their Grace and affection upon Gurudeo and other devotees.

On his return to Poona Shri. Rambhau wrote the following letter to his Spiritual sister, Smt. Shivalingavva-akka, from the Deccan College, Poona on 20-12-1973.
"Your Holiness,

I revere you and offer my salutations with the feeling that you are personification of Spiritual Bliss, Oh, Thou Smt. Shivalingavva-akka, my revered spiritual sister, I, Ramachandra Dattatreya Ranade bow my head at your holy feet and submit the following thoughts unto you:

Since long, I had a desire to meet You. This was fulfilled during my stay at Inchageri at the time of the spiritual conference in the month of Margasheersha. I am really overjoyed due to this-"परमानंदु आजि मानसी । भेटि झाली या संतासी" 'With the meeting of thes aints, I am overjoyed in my mind'. As per this expression of the great saint, I was immensely happy in your spiritual company. I feel it as my humble duty to act up and follow the spiritual path which has been treaded upon by you, after having concurrence in life of personal spiritual experience with the spiritual experience of ths Great Master.

Today, I have written to Shri. Samarth at Umadi and communicated to him about our well-being. I had been feeling extremely anxious about the health of our spiritual master. But, just as the sun, when freed from the solar eclipse, shines with double brilliance so also Sri. Maharaj on account of the improvement in his health and his cure from the impact of the disease, might shine with redoubled energy and lustre.

I cannot express my feeling of joy, if I get letters regarding your spiritual experiences.

I am yours in your kind service,

Sd/- Ramachandra Dattatraya Ranade.

The Passing away of the Saint of Umadi.

On 29th January 1914, the great Spiritual Master of Gurudeo Ranade left the mortal frame. Shri. Rambhau had a premonition of this sad event a couple of days earlier at Poona, when he saw the bed of the saint of Umadi in his dream vacant, without the body of Shri. Maharaj sleeping on it. After the physical death of the saint of Umadi, Shri. Rambhau went to Inchageri and met Shri. Amburao Baba with the heart drenched in unforeseen grief. Shri. Baba consoled all the devotees of Maharaj with the unparalled fortitude, courage and sublimity of heart like that of Maharaj himself. Sri. Rambhau composed a realistic and pathetie poem in Marathi after the passing away of Shri Maharaj. I am giving below the English translation of the same.

My Master Departs :

You thought your mission was over and departed from here so soon,
You gave up all your functions !
With a cautious pre-intimation .... (1)
" Who will preach devotion after you?

The disciples fondly inquire.
• Why worry ? The Lord will look to it,
God's work will continue for ever .... (2)
With this my Master sealed his lips
His mind absorbed in meditation.
No food, no drink did he take
For full days eleven .... (3)

Thursday night, his last night here
Bhajan went on near him in the hall
With heavy hearts and tearful eyes
They lit camphor, cried Vithal Hail......... (4)

A glance at the last flicker of the flame
A clap of his hands and he breathed his last ......
Thus did the Master leave his body
His light dissolving in the Light Divine .... (5)

On 18. 2. 1914 Shri. Amburao Baba wrote a letter to Sri. Rambhau from Inchageri. The selected portion from it is translated here in English, "The Samadhi of Shri. Umadi Maharaj was solemnly installed on the full moonday of Māgha (माघ) ,All the devotees read your letter and highly admired your faith and stead-fast devotion .... Several Brahmin priests (who were devotees) from Jamkhandi attended this solemn function. When the Brahmin priest ritualistically washed the bones of Maharaj with Vedic mantras, they reported that they heard a sound emerging from the bones, similar to the emergence of the name of Vithal, Vithal from the bones of Chokhamela (a cobbler-Saint.)

... You should steadily continue your meditation on

Divine Name as per instructions of Maharaj. Your money order of Rs. 75/- has been duly received. Kindly be writing often about your well-being."

Historical & unique events regarding the greatness of the saint of Umadi.

Shri. Bhausaheb Maharaj was born on Ramanavami, just like Sri. Samarth Rāmdās, in the year 1843 A. D. His father's name was Khanderao and mother's name was Bhāgeerathibai. He had three brothers. First elder brother was Nanasaheb Deshpande of considerate, profound, thoughtful, prudent and foresighted nature. Second brother was Dajiba, a good natured person and the youngest brother was Shri. Bhaurao Deshpande i. e. the saint of Umadi.

Shri. Maharaj in his young days was a great devotee of God Hanuman. He was initially a devotee of God with form (सगुणभक्ति). Then, he even criticised the devotion of his elder brother, Nanasaheb to God without Form (Nirgun Bhakti, निर्गुण भक्ति).

Once when Sri. Bhausaheb was very young he went to Nimbargi and even questioned Sri. Nimbargikar maharaj; ' Well, Maharaj ! Is it a fact that you initiate a divine Name and show God? Shri. Nimbargikar Maharaj simply smiled and replied through silence only. Because, he could perceive his future great disciple in Bhausaheb maharaj.

Shri. Bhausaheb Maharaj was married at an early age with smt. Kashibai, the daughter of a well-known family of Vaishnava Pandit from Nimbargi.

Shri. Raghunath Priya or Sadhubuva, a Andhra saint who was a great Siddha, was a disciple of Shri. Nimbargi Maharaj. He regularly observed, for many years, the deep devotion of young Bhaurao of Umadi to God Hanuman at the temple in Umadi. He daily greeted with folded hands the boy devotee in Bhaurao and used to prostrate before him. As a result Shri. Bhausaheb Maharaj used to gratefully tell later in his life that his Guru made him take to Nirgun Bhakti by prostrating before him when he was a young boy and was a staunch devotee of God Hanuman.

Once Shri. Bhausaheb in his young days was extremely harassed by the skin trouble of Itches. Inspite of his strict observance of the daily spiritual routine and other rural medical treatment, the skin trouble could not be easily cured. During that period he was doing the work of selling the Government stamps with higher rate of commission than what was permitted. He felt that the skin trouble might not have been cured due to this act of his. Thereafter he went to Nimbargi to meet the saint of Nimbargi, his Guru, and told him all the details. On hearing the entire details Shri. Nimbargi Maharaj told him that the extra commission that he was receiving in the sale of the stamps should be rigidly stopped and then the trouble would vanish. Accordingly, Shri. Maharaj changed his mode of commission and consequently he was free from the skin trouble.

On every Saturday the saint of Umadi used to go fo Nimbargi for the holy company of his Guru for the whole day. Thus, he availed the spiritual benefits of the pious company of his guru for full 27 years.

Gurudeo Ranade.

Shri. Bhausaheb Maharaj had three sons, Krishnajipant, Ramrao and Bhimrao. His wife died in the year 1837 A. D. when he was only44 years of age.

Shri. Maharaj during the spiritual Saptah at Terdal in the house of Jitmal Shetji, had a vision of seven storied building flooded with light. In that spiritual vision he could not find the way back out of the building which was decorated with pearls and diamonds of the size of a coconut. There were long bearded Rishis and Munis. At Jamkhandi he used to go at 3 A. M. early in the morning in darkness to a solitary place outside the city limits for meditation. The place where he went for meditation was full of thorns and wild cactus growth. When questioned by one of his disciples, Sri Mahadeo Bhataji of Nimbargi, who followed him in the morning but could not reach the exact spot where Maharaj used to sit for meditation, was told in reply by Maharaj that the spiritual form of God goes ahead of him and always shows the way through that thick jungle.

Shri. Bhausahab Maharaj was addresed by Shri. Amburao Baba as Swaroopadhikari - स्वरूपाधिकारी-One who had seen, touched, conversed with and realised his spiritual self. He had the vision of a Kalpa Vriksha-Celestial Wish Tree. Once, Shri. Bhausaheb Maharaj while meditating in the room on the top of Nimbargi maharaj's Samadhi at Inchageri, saw in his spiritual vision the saint of Nimbargi who expressed his gratification and joy for the great spiritual pomp and magnificance of devotional programmes at Inchageri. So also Shri. Bhausaheb Maharaj had once the spiritual vision of Samarth Rāmdās at the end of a spiritual Saptāh when the reading of the Pothi-Dāsbodha was completed and flowers were offered on the Pothi. Sri. Samarth Ramdas was standing there near the Pothi of Dāsbodha. For 18 years Sri. Bhausaheb Maharaj meditated on the divine name standing at night for two hours with a prayer for the growth and spread of the spiritual teachings of the saint of Nimbargi. The spiritual gathering that was held in the month of Shravan for 18 years in the house of Maharaj of Umadi was indeed rare and sublime because of the continuous attendance for 9 hours at a strefch to spiritual meditation by all the disciples of Maharaj.

Shri. Bhausaheb Maharaj went over to Pandharpur on 23rd December 1910 with Nagappa Nimbargi, Nandeppa, Shivalingawwa and Krishnajipant. All camped at the wada of the Raja of Jamkhandi at Pandharpur. Shri. Bhausaheb Maharaj had a thrilling spiritual vision of the God of Pandharpur on 24-12-1910. Smt. Shivalingawwa wrote a letter from Pandharpur on 24-12-1910 which runs thus, " When God Pandurang and Maharaj met each other, then, the unique magnificance, glory and pomp and deep love of devotion and joy were supreme. The whole sky was glittering with Divine Light like the zumbar or a Jewelry cluster. The whole sight was infused with divine and spiritual phenomena which cannot be described by words of mouth. Those who could perceive the divine and the spiritual exhuberance through supersensuous third eye of intuitional wisdom can alone understand and grasp the significance. When Maharaj had a spiritual vision of Pandurang there was a shower of celestial flowers. All that blissful joy was shared by the devotees of Maharaj, who danced with devotional songs and ecstatic clappings at the holy gates of the temple of Pandurang. Maharaj returned immediately after the Divine Vision." Thereafter Sri. Maharaj went to his place of sojourn at Pandharpur in the wada of Raja of Jamkhandi and because he could not contain in himself the effulgence and exuberance of spiritual joy, he wallowed like a child on the parapet of the building.

Maharaj stayed at Pandharpur for five days. All his spiritual programmes of meditation, spiritual discourse and bhajan were going on at Pandharput as usual.

In the year 1910 in the spiritual week in the month of shravan on Ekadashi day of fasting there was torrential rain at Inchageri. The bund near the mutt at Inchageri was overflowing with water. There was no dry place left in the mutt, even for sitting for meditation. All devotees were panicky. Realising the gravity of the dangerous situation, Nandeppa, a devout disciple of Maharaj, approached Maharaj who was sitting for meditation in his room and informed him of the grave situation. Shri. Maharaj came out of his meditational room and looked at the sky and greeted with folded hands and went back into his room. Immediately, there was a rupture in the bund and all the collected water in the mutt, flowed out and the risk was averted. Then while discoursing on the Dasabodh Pothi Shri Bhausaheb maharaj told in all seriousness and gravity of devotion. पडता जडभारी । दासे आठवावा हरी । मग तो होवू नेदी शीण । आड घाली सुदर्शन " Whenever the devotee is in the midst of difficulties, he should devoutely and intensely remember God and pray for his protection. Then God will run to his help and protect the devotee with his Divine Instrument of Sudarshan Chakra, the brilliant Divine Wheel.

In the year 1911 on Kartik Vadya Panchami, (5th day of the 2nd half of Kartik month) Shri. Mahadevbhadji Nimbargi approached Maharaj at Navalgi and told him that there was famine and there was no rain. To that Shri. Bhausaheb Maharaj immediately replied that there will be ample rain and showers on Margasheersha Shuddha Ekadashi. Then, Gurudeo Ranade was also present there. Accordingly it rained heavily exactly on that day, when Gurudeo was on his way to Inchageri. Thus, the words of Maharaj were proved true by factual events. Shri. Bhausaheb Maharaj carried on the spiritual torch of Shri. Nimbargikar Maharaj for 3o years. On 23 12. 1913 Shri. Maharaj left Inchageri for Umadi and again returned to Inchageri on Pausha Shudha Pournima. There, his illness took a serious turn and on Magh Shuddha Tritiya. i.e. 29-1-1914 he passed away in the Divine Meditation. On the 12th day of his physical passing away, Shri. Amburao Baba had a spiritual vision of Shri. Bhausaheb Maharaj with a silken Dhoti on his body and alerting Amburao, "It was time for meals ! Get up! "

Once when Shri. Bhausaheb Maharaj saw Amburao Baba lighting camphor and performing Arati in front of his photo, he broke and tore away that photo. This happened when Maharaj was alive. Since then Baba never performed Arati before a photograph; but he burned the camphor after his meditation without any photograph before him.

After the passing of Sri. Bhausaheb Maharaj there was a temporary stone platform for his Samadhi-relic under a peepal tree. The peepal tree was at the back side of the present Samadhi of Shri. Maharaj For about 15 days in the beginning a big cobra used to spread his hood on the Samadhi of Maharaj and protected it from the afternoon blazing Sun. Shri. Rambhau Phadnis performed Arati of the cobra every day when he went there for worshipping the Samadhi of Maharaj. Sri. Amburao Baba reported that the cobra with its hood spread on the Samadhi of Maharaj remained there till the end of the morning Bhajan.

Gurudeo's pen-picture of the Saint of Umadi.

Shri. Maharaj was like a president of the spiritual parliament. The Gods on Earth, who attended the parliament, were only those persons who have dedicated themselves completely to the meditation on the Divine Name.-- 'जेथे भगवंत तिष्ठतु आनंदभरे–' where God is standing and dancing with the joy of devotion In such a holy place like Inchageri Sri. Maharaj meditated for years together with perfect discipline and firm determination. There is no other better occupation than the constant preoccupation of spiritual meditation on the Name of God. There is no doubt that great saints like revered maharaj who have come to the succour of the needy and afflicted and who have blessed the suffering humanity with peace of mind and contentment through spiritual discourses and by imparting Divine Name to the aspirants have really made human life worth living.

The disinterested love, the most compassionate and kind nature, typical regularity in determined and disciplined meditation on Divine Name, unparalled self-control, equality of treatment of young and old, rich and poor, innate affection for disciples, profound devotion to his spiritual master, sublime faith in Self-Realisation -'Atmadnyana ', his serenity and purity of heart which were instinctively unworldly and above all, his complete freedom and detachment from worldly entanglements were typical traits of Maharaj.

Sri. Maharaj in his last days was like a mature and a ripe fruit; how shall I express my gratitude for him ?. His mentor. Lingappa Savalgi once wrote 'We have two Gurus; one visible and the other unvisible. The two will some time become one. The ignorant call such a union ' death '.

In his letter dated 8-3-1972 Gurudeo wrote to Maharaj as under: ' It would be more appropriate to call you ' Ātmadnyāna ' - Self-Realisation,' rather than Sri. Bhausaheb Maharaj. Since you have realised your identity with the Almighty, all your attributes such as body, name and form have been fully merged in God. As you are identified with Lord Almighty what harm is there in calling you ' Ātmadeva '-Lord-Self? Recently, I have come across several saints. But, I did not find even one, who knows like you, what Self-Realisation means ? Hence, rarely do we find anybody who has understood the exact nature of Self-realisation."

Shri Maharaj had experienced the essence of the teachings of Upanishads. He might not have read the Upanishads himself, but he had identified himself with the source of spiritual wisdom (आत्मज्ञान), in the Upanishads. (Preface to Namawali P.24)

Spiritual Ministry.

After the death of Sri. Amburaobaba in 1933 all the responsibility of spiritual guidance inevitably devolved on Gurudeo. Sri. Bhausaheb Maharaj appeared in his dreams successively and placed in his hands chits bearing ths Nos. 12 and 18 respectively. The significance of these dreams was proved after Gurudeo began initiating. He initially initiated 12 and 18 persons respectively during the years 1936 and 1 937. The spiritual name which the Guru initiates is called ' Sabija Nama ' - ' Seed-mantra', not a mere word out of the many in use, but it is a Name charged with spiritual power when imparted by a Guru.

'God is not our henchman to be always at our beck and call. The Bank is ever full. Only the cheque should be in order as testified by the spiritual Master', so said Gurudeo when he spoke about initiation. On another occasion Gurudeo said that he sent for a young and an illiterate Harijana boy and an auto-driver, and voluntarily offered them the spiritual Name. He found in both of them the sprouts of genuine God-hunger. " Many are after us ", he said, " but we are also after a few." Shri. Bhausaheb Maharaj often told him that spirituality was not a matter of words but of practice. He declared that the end of human life was to realise God " for oneself and for others."

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